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VOL. 1289.

THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS
BY
JOHN FORSTER.

VOL. 4.

LEIPZIG: BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ.

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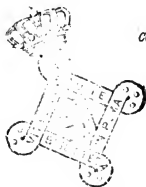
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THE LIFE
OF
CHARLES DICKENS.

BY
JOHN FORSTER.

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VOL. IV



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1885

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THE
LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SKETCHES CHIEFLY PERSONAL.

1846.

SOME sketches from the life in his pleasantest vein now claim to be taken from the same series of letters; and I will prefix one or two less important notices, for the most part personal also, that have characteristic mention of his opinions in them.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Home-politics he criticized, in what he wrote on the 24th of August, much in the spirit of his last excellent remark on the Protestant and Catholic cantons; having no sympathy with the course taken by the whigs in regard to Ireland after they had defeated Peel on his coercion bill, and resumed the government. "I am perfectly appalled by the hesitation and cowardice of the whigs. To bring in that arms bill, bear the brunt of the attack upon it, take out the obnoxious clauses, still retain the bill, and finally withdraw it, seems to

Home
politics.

The whigs:

LAUSANNE:
1846.

The whigs:

and Peel.

Malthus
philosophy.

Defective
legislation.

"me the meanest and most halting way of going to work that ever was taken. I cannot believe in them. Lord John must be helpless among them. They seem somehow or other never to know what cards they hold in their hands, and to play them out blindfold. The contrast with Peel (as he was last) is, I agree with you, certainly not favourable. I don't believe now they ever would have carried the repeal of the corn law, if they could." Referring in the same letter* to the reluctance of public men of all parties to give the needful help to schemes of emigration, he ascribed it to a secret belief in "the gentle politico-economical principle that a surplus population must and ought to starve;" in which for himself he never could see anything but disaster for all who trusted to it. "I am convinced that its philosophers would sink any government, any cause, any doctrine, even the most righteous. There is a sense and humanity in the mass, in

* Where he makes remark also on a class of offences which are still most inadequately punished: "I hope you will follow up your idea about the defective state of the law in reference to women, by some remarks on the inadequate punishment of that ruffian flippantly called by the liners the Wholesale Matrimonial Speculator. My opinion is, that in any well-ordered state of society, and advanced spirit of social jurisprudence, he would have been flogged more than once (privately), and certainly sentenced to transportation for no less a term than the rest of his life. Surely the man who threw the woman out of window was no worse, if so bad."



LAUSANNE:
1846.

"the long run, that will not bear them; and they
"will wreck their friends always, as they wrecked
"them in the working of the Poor-law-bill. Not
"all the figures that Babbage's calculating machine
"could turn up in twenty generations, would
"stand in the long run against the general heart."

Of other topics in his letters, one or two have the additional attractiveness derivable from touches of personal interest when these may with propriety be printed. Hardly within the class might have fallen a mention of Mark Lemon, of whom our recent play, and his dramatic adaptation of the *Chimes*, had given him pleasant experiences, if I felt less strongly not only that its publication would have been gladly sanctioned by the subject of it, but that it will not now displease another to whom also it refers, herself the member of a family in various ways distinguished on the stage, and to whom, since her husband's death, well-merited sympathy and respect have been paid. "After turning Mrs. Lemon's portrait over, in my
"mind, I am convinced that there is not a grain
"of bad taste in the matter, and that there is a
"manly composure and courage in the proceeding
"deserving of the utmost respect. If Lemon were
"one of your braggart honest men, he would set
"a taint of bad taste upon that action as upon
"everything else he might say or do; but being
"what he is, I admire him for it greatly, and hold
"it to be a proof of an exalted nature and a true
"heart. Your idea of him, is mine. I am sure
"he is an excellent fellow. We talk about not

An incident
of character.



LAUSANNE:
1846.

Self-com-
parison.

Hood's *Tylney*
Hall.

Duke of
Wellington.

"liking such and such a man because he doesn't look one in the face,—but how much we should esteem a man who looks the world in the face, composedly, and neither shirks it nor bullies it. "Between ourselves, I say with shame and self-reproach that I am quite sure if Kate had been a Columbine her portrait would not be hanging, "in character,' in Devonshire-terrace."

He speaks thus of a novel by Hood. "I have been reading poor Hood's *Tylney Hall*: the most extraordinary jumble of impossible extravagance, and especial cleverness, I ever saw. The man drawn to the life from the pirate-bookseller, is wonderfully good; and his recommendation to a reduced gentleman from the university, to rise from nothing as he, the pirate, did, and go round to the churches and see whether there's an opening, and begin by being a beadle, is one of the finest things I ever read, in its way." The same letter has a gentle little trait of the great duke, touching in its simplicity, and worth preserving. "I had a letter from Tagart the day before yesterday, with a curious little anecdote of the Duke of Wellington in it. They have had a small cottage at Walmer; and one day—the other day only—the old man met their little daughter Lucy, a child about Mamey's age, near the garden; and having kissed her, and asked her what was her name, and who and what her parents were, tied a small silver medal round her neck with a bit of pink ribbon, and asked the child to keep it in remembrance of him. There

"is something good, and aged, and odd in it. Is there not?"

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Another of his personal references was to Lord Grey, to whose style of speaking and general character of mind he had always a strongly-expressed dislike, drawn not impartially or quite justly from the days of reaction that followed the reform debates, when the whig leader's least attractive traits were presented to the young reporter. "He is a very intelligent agreeable fellow, the said "Watson by the bye" (he is speaking of the member of the Lausanne circle with whom he established friendliest after-intercourse); "he sat "for Northamptonshire in the reform bill time, "and is high sheriff of his county and all the rest "of it; but has not the least nonsense about him, "and is a thorough good liberal. He has a charming wife, who draws well, and is making a sketch "of Rosemont for us that shall be yours in Paris."

Mr. Watson of
Rockingham.

(It is already, by permission of its present possessor, the reader's, and all the world's who may take interest in the little doll's house of Lausanne which lodged so illustrious a tenant.) "He was "giving me some good recollections of Lord Grey "the other evening when we were playing at battle-dore (old Lord Grey I mean), and of the constitutional impossibility he and Lord Lansdowne "and the rest laboured under, of ever personally "attaching a single young man, in all the excitement of that exciting time, to the leaders of the "party. It was quite a delight to me, as I listened, "to recall my own dislike of his style of speaking,

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Vol. III.

A recollection
of his reporting
days.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

"his fishy coldness, his uncongenial and unsympathetic politeness, and his insufferable though most gentlemanly artificiality. The shape of his head (I see it now) was misery to me, and weighed down my youth . . ."

Christmas
book.

It was now the opening of the second week in August; and before he finally addressed himself to the second number of *Dombey*, he had again turned a lingering look in the direction of his Christmas book. "It would be such a great relief to me to get that small story out of the way."

Returns to
Dombey.

Wisely, however, again he refrained, and went on with *Dombey*; at which he had been working for a little time when he described to me (24th of August) a visit from two English travellers, of one of whom with the slightest possible touch he gives a speaking likeness.*

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Vol. I.

* Ten days before there had been a visit from Mr. Ainsworth and his daughters on their way to Geneva. "I breakfasted with him at the hotel Gibbon next morning and they dined here afterwards, and we walked about all day, talking of our old days at Kensal-lodge." The same letter told me: "We had a regatta at Ouchy the other day, mainly supported by the contributions of the English handfull. It concluded with a rowing-match by women, which was very funny. I wish you could have seen Roche appear on the Lake, rowing, in an immense boat, Cook, Anne, two nurses, Katey, Mamey, Walley, Chickenstalker, and Baby; no boatmen or other degrading assistance; and all sorts of Swiss tubs splashing about them . . . Senior is coming here to-morrow, I believe, with his wife; and they talk of Brunel and his wife as on their way. We dine at Haldi-

News from
the lake.

"Not having your letter as usual, I sat down
 "to write to you on speculation yesterday, but
 "lapsed in my uncertainty into *Dombey*, and
 "worked at it all day. It was, as it has been
 "since last Tuesday morning, incessantly raining
 "regular mountain rain. After dinner, at a little
 "after seven o'clock, I was walking up and down
 "under the little colonnade in the garden, racking
 "my brain about *Dombey's* and *Battles of Lives*,
 "when two travel-stained-looking men approached,
 "of whom one, in a very limp and melancholy
 "straw hat, ducked perpetually to me as he came
 "up the walk. I couldn't make them out at all;
 "and it wasn't till I got close up to them that I
 "recognised A. and (in the straw hat) N. They
 "had come from Geneva by the steamer, and
 "taken a scrambling dinner on board. I gave
 "them some fine Rhine wine, and cigars innumer-
 "able. A. enjoyed himself and was quite at home.
 "N. (an odd companion for a man of genius) was
 "snobbish, but pleased and good-natured. A. had
 "a five pound note in his pocket which he had
 "worn down, by careless carrying about, to some
 "two-thirds of its original size, and which was so
 "ragged in its remains that when he took it out

LAUSANNE:
 1846.

Two English
 travellers.

A man of
 genius and his
 companion.

"mand's to meet Senior—which solitary and most interesting
 "piece of intelligence is all the news I know of . . . Take
 "care you don't back out of your Paris engagement; but that
 "we really do have (please God) some happy hours there.
 "Kate, Georgy, Mamey, Katey, Charley, Walley, Chicken-
 "stalker, and Baby, send loves . . . I am all anxiety and
 "fever to know what we start *Dombey* with!"

LAUSANNE:
1846.

"bits of it flew about the table. 'Oh Lor you know—now really—like Goldsmith you know—' or any of those great men!' said N, with the very 'snatches in his voice and burst of speaking' that reminded Leigh Hunt of Cloten. . . 'The clouds were lying, as they do in such weather here, on the earth, and our friends saw no more of Lake Leman than of Battersea. Nor had they, it might appear, seen more of the Mer de Glace, on their way here; their talk about it bearing much resemblance to that of the man who had been to Niagara and said it was nothing but water.'

Ill mood for
travel.

Party among
the hills.

His next letter described a day's party of the Cerjats, Watsons, and Haldimands, among the neighbouring hills, which, contrary to his custom while at work, he had been unable to resist the temptation of joining. They went to a mountain-lake twelve miles off, had dinner at the public-house 'on the lake, and returned home by Vevay at which they rested for tea; and where pleasant talk with Mr. Cerjat led to anecdotes of an excellent friend of ours, formerly resident at Lausanne, with which the letter closed. Our friend was a distinguished writer, and a man of many sterling fine qualities, but with a habit of occasional free indulgence in coarseness of speech, which, though his earlier life had made it as easy to acquire as difficult to drop, did always less than justice to a very manly, honest, and really gentle nature. He had as much genuinely admirable stuff in him as any favourite hero of Smollett or Fielding, and I never knew anyone who reminded

A Smollett
hero.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

me of those characters so much. "It would seem, "Mr. Cerjat tells me, that he was, when here, infinitely worse in his general style of conversation, than now—sermuchser, as Toodle says, that "Cerjat describes himself as having always been "in unspeakable agony when he was at his table, "lest he should forget himself (or remember himself, as I suggested) and break out before the "ladies. There happened to be living here at "that time a stately English baronet and his wife, ^{Milksop youths.} "who had two milksop sons, concerning whom "they cherished the idea of accomplishing their "education into manhood coexistently with such "perfect purity and innocence, that they were "hardly to know their own sex. Accordingly, they "were sent to no school or college, but had masters "of all sorts at home, and thus reached eighteen "years or so, in what Falstaff calls a kind of "male green-sickness. At this crisis of their innocent existence, our ogre friend encountered ^{Ogre and lambs.} "these lambs at dinner, with their father, at Cerjat's "house; and, as if possessed by a devil, launched "out into such frightful and appalling impriety—ranging over every kind of forbidden "topic and every species of forbidden word "and every sort of scandalous anecdote—that "years of education in Newgate would have "been as nothing compared with their experience "of that one afternoon. After turning paler and "paler, and more and more stoney, the baronet, "with a half-suppressed cry, rose and fled. But "the sons—intent on the ogre—remained behind

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Victims of
orthological
impropriety.

A martyr of a
husband.

Sir Joseph
and his
family.

"instead of following him; and are supposed to
"have been ruined from that hour. Isn't that a
"good story? I can SEE our friend and his pupils
"now . . . Poor fellow! He seems to have a hard
"time of it with his wife. She had no interest
"whatever in her children; and was such a fury,
"that, being dressed to go out to dinner, she
"would sometimes, on no other provocation than
"a pin out of its place or some such thing, fall upon
"a little maid she had, beat her till she couldn't
"stand, then tumble into hysterics, and be carried
"to bed. He suffered martyrdom with her; and
"seems to have been himself, in all good-natured
"easy-going ways, just what we know him now."

There were at this time some fresh arrivals
of travelling English at Lausanne, outside their
own little circle, and among them another
baronet and his family made amusing appearance.
"We have another English family here, one Sir
"Joseph and his lady, and ten children. Sir
"Joseph, a large baronet something in the Graham
"style, with a little, loquacious, flat-faced, dam-
"aged-featured, *old young* wife. They are fond
"of society, and couldn't well have less. They de-
"light in a view, and live in a close street at Ouchy,
"down among the drunken boatmen and the drays
"and omnibuses, where nothing whatever is to be
"seen but the locked wheels of carts scraping
"down the uneven, steep, stone pavement. The
"baronet plays double-dummy all day long, with
"an unhappy Swiss whom he has entrapped for
"that purpose; the baronet's lady pays visits; and

"the baronet's daughters play a Lausanne piano, LAUSANNE: 1846.
 "which must be heard to be appreciated . . ."

Another sketch in the same letter touches little more than the eccentricities (but all in good taste and good humour) of the subject of it, who is still gratefully remembered by English residents in Italy for his scholarly munificence, and for very valuable service conferred by it on Italian literature.

"Another curious man is backwards and forwards Lord Vernon.

"here—a Lord Vernon,* who is well-informed, a

"great Italian scholar deep in Dante, and a very

"good-humoured gentleman, but who has fallen

"into the strange infatuation of attending every

"rifle-match that takes place in Switzerland, ac- Passion for rifle-shooting.

"companyed by two men who load rifles for him,

"one after another, which he has been frequently

"known to fire off, two a minute, for fourteen

"hours at a stretch, without once changing his

"position or leaving the ground. He wins all

"kinds of prizes; gold watches, flags, teaspoons,

"teaboard, and so forth; and is constantly tra-

"velling about with them from place to place, in

"an extraordinary carriage, where you touch a

"spring and a chair flies out, touch another spring A wonderful carriage.

"and a bed appears, touch another spring and a

"closet of pickles opens, touch another spring and

"disclose a pantry. While Lady Vernon (said to

"be handsome and accomplished) is continually

* This was the fourth Baron Vernon, who succeeded to the title in 1829, and died seven years after the date of Dickens's description, in his 74th year.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

"cutting across this or that Alpine pass in the night, to meet him on the road, for a minute or two, on one of his excursions; these being the only times at which she can catch him. The last time he saw her, was five or six months ago, when they met and supped together on the St. Gothard! It is a monomania with him; of course. He is a man of some note; seconded one of Lord Melbourne's addresses; and had forty thousand a year, now reduced to ten, but nursing and improving every day. He was with us last Monday, and comes back from some out-of-the-way place to join another small picnic next Friday. As I have said, he is the very soul of good nature and cheerfulness, but one can't help being melancholy to see a man wasting his life in such a singular delusion. Isn't it odd? He knows my books very well, and seems interested in everything concerning them; being indeed accomplished in books generally, and attached to many elegant tastes."

Wasting life.

The Ladies
Taylor.

But the most agreeable addition to their own special circle was referred to in his first September letter, just when he was coming to the close of his second number of *Dombey*. "There are two nice girls here, the Ladies Taylor, daughters of Lord Headfort. Their mother was daughter (I think) of Sir John Stevenson, and Moore dedicated one part of the Irish Melodies to her. They inherit the musical taste, and sing very well. A proposal is on foot for our all bundling off on Tuesday (16 strong) to the top.

“of the Great St. Bernard. But the weather
 “seems to have broken, and the autumn rains to
 “have set in; which I devoutly hope will break
 “up the party. It would be a most serious hin-
 “drance to me, just now; but I have rashly pro-
 “mised. Do you know young Romilly? He is
 “coming over from Geneva when ‘the reading’
 “comes off, and is a fine fellow I am told. There
 “is not a bad little theatre here; and by way of
 “an artificial crowd, I should certainly have got
 “it open with an amateur company, if we were
 “not so few that the only thing we want is the
 “audience.” . . . The “reading” named by him
 was that of his first number, which was to “come
 “off” as soon as I could get the proofs out to
 him; but which the changes needful to be made,
 and to be mentioned hereafter, still delayed. The
 St. Bernard holiday, which within sight of his
 Christmas-book labour he would fain have thrown
 over, came off as proposed very fortunately for
 the reader, who might otherwise have lost one of
 his pleasantest descriptions. But before giving
 it, one more little sketch of character may be
 interposed as delicately done as anything in his
 writings. Steele’s observation is in the outline, and
 Charles Lamb’s humour in its touch of colouring.

LAUSANNE:
 1846.

Proposed trip
 to Great St.
 Bernard.

Reading of
 first *Dombey*.

“ . . . There are two old ladies (English) living
 “here who may serve me for a few lines of gossip
 “—as I have intended they should, over and over
 “again, but I have always forgotten it. There
 “were originally four old ladies, sisters, but two
 “of them have faded away in the course of eigh-

A sketch
 from life.

LAUSANNE:
1848.

Two sisters
and their
books:

a library too
gigantic:

to be got over
the Simplon.

"teen years, and withered by the side of John Kemble in the cemetery. They are very little, and very skinny; and each of them wears a row of false curls, like little rolling-pins, so low upon her brow, that there is no forehead; nothing above the eyebrows but a deep horizontal wrinkle, and then the curls. They live upon some small annuity. For thirteen years they have wanted very much to move to Italy, as the eldest old lady says the climate of this part of Switzerland doesn't agree with her, and preys upon her spirits; but they have never been able to go, because of the difficulty of moving 'the books.' This tremendous library belonged once upon a time to the father of these old ladies, and comprises about fifty volumes. I have never been able to see what they are, because one of the old ladies always sits before them; but they look, outside, like very old backgammon-boards. The two deceased sisters died in the firm persuasion that this precious property could never be got over the Simplon without some gigantic effort to which the united family was unequal. The two remaining sisters live, and will die also, in the same belief. I met the eldest (evidently drooping) yesterday, and recommended her to try Genoa. She looked shrewdly at the snow that closes up the mountain prospect just now, and said that when the spring was quite set in, and the avalanches were down, and the passes well open, she would certainly try that place, if they could devise any plan, in the course of the

“winter, for moving ‘the books.’ The whole
 “library will be sold by auction here, when they
 “are both dead, for about a napoleon; and some
 “young woman will carry it home in two journeys
 “with a basket.”

LAUSANNE:
1846.

The last letter sent me before he fell upon his self-appointed task for Christmas, contained a delightful account of the trip to the Great St. Bernard. It was dated on the sixth of September.

Trip to Great
St. Bernard.

“The weather obstinately clearing, we started
 “off last Tuesday for the Great St. Bernard, re-
 “turning here on Friday afternoon. The party
 “consisted of eleven people and two servants—
 “Haldimand, Mr. and Mrs. Cerjat and one daugh-
 “ter, Mr. and Mrs. Watson, two Ladies Taylor,
 “Kate, Georgy, and I. We were wonderfully
 “unanimous and cheerful; went away from here
 “by the steamer; found at its destination a whole
 “omnibus provided by the Brave (who went on in
 “advance everywhere); rode therein to Bex; found
 “two large carriages ready to take us to Martigny;
 “slept there; and proceeded up the mountain on
 “mules next day. Although the St. Bernard con-
 “vent is, as I dare say you know, the highest in-
 “habited spot but one in the world, the ascent is
 “extremely gradual and uncommonly easy: really
 “presenting no difficulties at all, until within the
 “last league, when the ascent, lying through a
 “place called the valley of desolation, is very aw-
 “ful and tremendous, and the road is rendered
 “toilsome by scattered rocks and melting snow.
 “The convent is a most extraordinary place, full

Ascent of the
mountain.

Valley of
Desolation.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Trip to Great
St. Bernard.

The convent.

C. D. and the
matins bell.

Scene at the
mountain top.

"of great vaulted passages, divided from each other with iron gratings; and presenting a series of the most astonishing little dormitories, where the windows are so small (on account of the cold and snow), that it is as much as one can do to get one's head out of them. Here we slept: supping, thirty strong, in a rambling room with a great wood-fire in it set apart for that purpose; with a grim monk, in a high black sugar-loaf hat with a great knob at the top of it, carving the dishes. At five o'clock in the morning the chapel bell rang in the dismallest way for matins: and I, lying in bed close to the chapel, and being awakened by the solemn organ and the chaunting, thought for a moment I had died in the night and passed into the unknown world. •

"I wish to God you could see that place. A great hollow on the top of a range of dreadful mountains, fenced in by riven rocks of every shape and colour: and in the midst, a black lake, with phantom clouds perpetually stalking over it. Peaks, and points, and plains of eternal ice and snow, bounding the view, and shutting out the world on every side: the lake reflecting nothing: and no human figure in the scene. The air so fine, that it is difficult to breathe without feeling out of breath; and the cold so exquisitely thin and sharp that it is not to be described. Nothing of life or living interest in the picture, but the grey dull walls of the convent. No vegetation of any sort or kind. Nothing

"growing, nothing stirring. Everything iron-bound,
 "and frozen up. Beside the convent, in a little
 "outhouse with a grated iron door which you
 "may unbolt for yourself, are the bodies of people
 "found in the snow who have never been claimed
 "and are withering away—not laid down, or
 "stretched out, but standing up, in corners and
 "against walls; some erect and horribly human,
 "with distinct expressions on the faces; some sunk
 "down on their knees; some dropping over on
 "one side; some tumbled down altogether, and
 "presenting a heap of skulls and fibrous dust.
 "There is no other decay in that atmosphere;
 "and there they remain during the short days and
 "the long nights, the only human company out
 "of doors, withering away by grains, and holding
 "ghastly possession of the mountain where they
 "died.

LAUSANNE:
 1816.
 Trip to Great
 St. Bernard.

Bodies found
 in the snow.

"It is the most distinct and individual place
 "I have seen, even in this transcendent country.
 "But, for the Saint Bernard holy fathers and con-
 "vent in themselves, I am sorry to say that they
 "are a piece of as sheer humbug as we ever learnt
 "to believe in, in our young days. Trashy French
 "sentiment and the dogs (of which, by the bye,
 "there are only three remaining) have done it all.
 "They are a lazy set of fellows; not over fond of
 "going out themselves; employing servants to
 "clear the road (which has not been important
 "or much used as a pass these hundred years);
 "rich; and driving a good trade in Innkeeping:
 "the convent being a common tavern in every-

The holy
 fathers.

Convent a
 tavern in all
 but sign.

LAUSANNE:
1846.
Trip to Great
St. Bernard.

A holy
brother and
Pickwick.

"thing but the sign. No charge is made for their hospitality, to be sure; but you are shown to a box in the chapel, where everybody puts in more than could, with any show of face, be charged for the entertainment; and from this the establishment derives a right good income. As to the self-sacrifice of living up there, they are obliged to go there young, it is true, to be inured to the climate: but it is an infinitely more exciting and various life than any other convent can offer; with constant change and company through the whole summer; with a hospital for invalids down in the valley, which affords another change; and with an annual begging-journey to Geneva and this place and all the places round for one brother or other, which affords farther change. The brother who carved at our supper could speak some English, and had just had *Pickwick* given him! — what a humbug he will think me when he tries to understand it! If I had had any other book of mine with me, I would have given it him, that I might have had some chance of being intelligible . . ."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LITERARY LABOUR AT LAUSANNE.

1846.

SOMETHING of the other side of the medal has now to be presented. His letters enable us to see him amid his troubles and difficulties of writing, as faithfully as in his leisure and enjoyments; and when, to the picture thus given of Dickens's home life in Switzerland, some account has been added of the vicissitudes of literary labour undergone in the interval, as complete a representation of the man will be afforded as could be taken from any period of his career. Of the larger life whereof it is part, the Lausanne life is indeed a perfect microcosm, wanting only the London streets. This was his chief present want, as will shortly be perceived: but as yet the reader does not feel it, and he sees otherwise in all respects at his best the great observer and humourist; interested in everything that commended itself to a thoroughly earnest and eagerly enquiring nature; popular beyond measure with all having intercourse with him; the centre, and very soul, of social enjoyment; letting nothing escape a vision that was not

LAUSANNE:
1846.A picture
completed.Great present
want.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Daily life.

Influences of
nature.

Imaginative
needs.

more keen than kindly; and even when apparently most idle, never idle in the sense of his art, but adding day by day to experiences that widened its range, and gave freer and healthier play to an imagination always busily at work, alert and active in a singular degree, and that seemed to be quite untiring. At his heart there was a genuine love of nature at all times; and strange as it may seem to connect this with such forms of humorous delineation as are most identified with his genius, it is yet the literal truth that the impressions of this noble Swiss scenery were with him during the work of many subsequent years: a present and actual, though it might be seldom a directly conscious, influence. When he said afterwards, that, while writing the book on which he is now engaged, he had not seen less clearly each step of the wooden midshipman's staircase, each pew of the church in which Florence was married, or each bed in the dormitory of Doctor Blimber's establishment, because he was himself at the time by the lake of Geneva, he might as truly have said that he saw them all the more clearly even because of that circumstance. He worked his humour to its greatest results by the freedom and force of his imagination; and while the smallest or commonest objects around him were food for the one, the other might have pined or perished without additional higher aliment. Dickens had little love for Wordsworth, but he was himself an example of the truth the great poet never tired of enforcing, that Nature has subtle helps for all who are ad-

mitted to become free of her wonders and mysteries.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Another noticeable thing in him is impressed upon these letters, as upon many also heretofore quoted, for indeed all of them are marvellously exact in the reproduction of his nature. He did not think lightly of his work; and the work that occupied him at the time was for the time paramount with him. But the sense he entertained, whether right or wrong, of the importance of what he had to do, of the degree to which it concerned others that the power he held should be exercised successfully, and of the estimate he was justified in forming as the fair measure of its worth or greatness, does not carry with it of necessity presumption or self-conceit. Few men have had less of either. It was part of the intense individuality by which he effected so much, to set the high value which in general he did upon what he was striving to accomplish; he could not otherwise have mastered one half the work he designed; and we are able to form an opinion, more just now for ourselves than it might have seemed to us then from others, of the weight and truth of such self-judgment. The fussy pretension of small men in great places, and the resolute self-assertion of great men in small places, are things essentially different. *Respice finem.* The exact relative importance of all our pursuits is to be arrived at by nicer adjustments of the Now and the Hereafter than are possible to contemporary judgments; and there have been some indications

Self-judgments.

Intense individuality.

The now and the hereafter.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

since his death confirmatory of the belief, that the estimate which he thought himself entitled to form of the labours to which his life was devoted, will be strengthened, not lessened, by time.

Work to be
done.

Dickens proposed to himself, it will be remembered, to write at Lausanne not only the first four numbers of his larger book, but the Christmas book suggested to him by his fancy of a battle field; and reserving what is to be said of *Dombey* to a later chapter, this and its successor will deal only with what he finished as well as began in Switzerland, and will show at what cost even so much was achieved amid his other and larger engagements.

A fancy for
Christmas
book.

He had restless fancies and misgivings before he settled to his first notion. "I have been thinking this last day or two," he wrote on the 25th of July, "that good Christmas characters might be grown out of the idea of a man imprisoned for ten or fifteen years: his imprisonment being the gap between the people and circumstances of the first part and the altered people and circumstances of the second, and his own changed mind. Though I shall probably proceed with the Battle idea, I should like to know what you think of this one?" It was afterwards used in a modified shape for the *Tale of Two Cities*. "I shall begin the little story straightway," he wrote, a few weeks later; "but I have been dimly conceiving a very ghostly and wild idea, which I suppose I must now reserve for the next Christmas book. *Nous verrons*. It will mature in the

Another
Christmas
fancy.

"streets of Paris by night, as well as in London." This took ultimately the form of the *Haunted Man*, which was not written until the winter of 1848. At last I knew that his first slip was done, and that even his eager busy fancy would not turn him back again.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

But other unsatisfied wants and cravings had meanwhile broken out in him, of which I heard near the close of the second number of *Dombey*. The first he had finished at the end of July; and the second, which he began on the 8th of August, he was still at work upon in the first week of September, when this remarkable announcement came to me. It was his first detailed confession of what he felt so continuously, and if that were possible even more strongly, as the years went on, that there is no single passage in any of his letters which throws such a flood of illuminative light into the portions of his life which will always awaken the greatest interest. Very much that is to follow must be read by it. "You can hardly imagine," he wrote on the 30th of August, "what infinite pains I take, or what extraordinary difficulty I find in getting on FAST. Invention, thank God, seems the easiest thing in the world; and I seem to have such a preposterous sense of the ridiculous, after this long rest" (it was now over two years since the close of *Chuzzlewit*), "as to be constantly requiring to restrain myself from launching into extravagances in the height of my enjoyment. But the difficulty of going at what I call a rapid pace, is prodigious: it is

Second
number of
Dombey.

A personal
revelation.

Work after
rest.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Craving for
streets.

Food for
fancy.

"almost an impossibility. I suppose this is partly
"the effect of two years' ease, and partly of
"the absence of streets and numbers of figures.
"I can't express how much I want these. It
"seems as if they supplied something to my brain,
"which it cannot bear, when busy, to lose. For
"a week or a fortnight I can write prodigiously
"in a retired place (as at Broadstairs), and a day
"in London sets me up again and starts me. But
"the toil and labour of writing, day after day,
"without that magic lantern, is IMMENSE!! I don't
"say this, at all in low spirits, for we are perfectly
"comfortable here, and I like the place very much
"indeed, and the people are even more friendly
"and fond of me than they were in Genoa. I
"only mention it as a curious fact, which I have
"never had an opportunity of finding out before.
"*My* figures seem disposed to stagnate without
"crowds about them. I wrote very little in Genoa
"(only the *Chimes*), and fancied myself conscious
"of some such influence there—but Lord! I had
"two miles of streets at least, lighted at night, to
"walk about in; and a great theatre to repair to,
"every night." At the close of the letter he told
me that he had pretty well matured the general
idea of the Christmas book, and was burning to
get to work on it. He thought it would be all
the better, for a change, to have no fairies or
spirits in it, but to make it a simple domestic tale.*

* Writing on Sunday he had said: "I hope to finish the
"second number to-morrow, and to send it off bodily by

In less than a week from this date his second number was finished, his first slip of the little book done, and his confidence greater. They had had wonderful weather,* so clear that he could see from the Neuchâtel road the whole of Mont Blanc, six miles distant, as plainly as if he were standing close under it in the courtyard of the little inn at Chamounix; and, though again it was raining when he wrote, his "nailed shoes" were by him and his "great waterproof cloak" in preparation for a "fourteen-mile walk" before dinner. Then, after three days more, came some-

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Second
Dombey done.

"Tuesday's post. On Wednesday I purpose, please God, "beginning the *Battle of Life*. I shall peg away at that, "without turning aside to *Dombey* again; and if I can only do "it within the month!" I had to warn him, on receiving these intimations, that he was trying too much.

* The storm of rain formerly mentioned by him had not been repeated, but the weather had become unsettled, and he thus referred to the rainfall which made that summer so disastrous in England. "What a storm that must have been "in London! I wish we could get something like it, here . . . "It is thundering while I write, but I fear it don't look black "enough for a clearance. The echoes in the mountains are "of such a stupendous sort, that a peal of thunder five or ten "minutes long, is here the commonest of circumstances . . ." That was early in August, and at the close of the month he wrote: "I forgot to tell you that yesterday week, at half-past "7 in the morning, we had a smart shock of an earthquake, "lasting, perhaps, a quarter of a minute. It awoke me in "bed. The sensation was so curious and unlike any other, "that I called out at the top of my voice I was sure it was "an earthquake."

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Farther con-
fession.

Curious
wants of the
mind.

A reading
of his first
Dombey.

thing of a sequel to the confession before made, which will be read with equal interest. "The absence of any accessible streets continues to worry me, now that I have so much to do, in a most singular manner. It is quite a little mental phenomenon. I should not walk in them in the day time, if they were here, I dare say: but at night I want them beyond description. I don't seem able to get rid of my spectres unless I can lose them in crowds. However, as you say, there are streets in Paris, and good suggestive streets too: and trips to London will be nothing then. WHEN I have finished the Christmas book, I shall fly to Geneva for a day or two, before taking up with *Dombey* again. I like this place better and better; and never saw, I think, more agreeable people than our little circle is made up of. It is so little, that one is not 'bothered' in the least; and their interest in the inimitable seems to strengthen daily. I read them the first number last night 'was a' week, with unrelateable success; and old Mrs. Marcet, who is devilish 'cute, guessed directly (but I didn't tell her she was right) that little Paul would die. They were all so apprehensive that it was a great pleasure to read it; and I shall leave here, if all goes well, in a brilliant shower of sparks struck out of them by the promised reading of the Christmas book." Little did either of us then imagine to what these readings were to lead, but even thus early they were taking in his mind the shape of a sort of jest that the smallest opportunity of

favour might have turned into earnest. In his very next letter he wrote to me: "I was thinking
"the other day that in these days of lecturings
"and readings, a great deal of money might
"possibly be made (if it were not *infra dig*) by
"one's having Readings of one's own books. It
"would be an *odd* thing. I think it would take
"immensely. What do you say? Will you step
"to Dean-street, and see how Miss Kelly's engage-
"ment-book (it must be an immense volume!)
"stands? Or shall I take the St. James's?" My
answer is to be inferred from his rejoinder: but
even at this time, while heightening and carrying
forward his jest, I suspected him of graver desires
than he cared to avow; and the time was to come,
after a dozen years, when with earnestness equal
to his own I continued to oppose, for reasons to
be stated in their place, that which he had set
his heart upon too strongly to abandon, and
which I still can only wish he had preferred to
surrender with all that seemed to be its enormous
gains! "I don't think you have exercised your
"usual judgment in taking Covent-garden for me.
"I doubt it is too large for my purpose. How-
"ever, I shall stand by whatever you propose to
"the proprietors."

LAUSANNE:
1846.First thought
of public
readings.A jesting
proposal:with grave
results.

Soon came the changes of trouble and vexation
I had too surely seen. "You remember," he wrote,
"your objection about the two stories. I made
"over light of it. I ought to have considered
"that I have never before really tried the opening
"of two together—having always had one pretty

Two tales in
hand.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

"far ahead when I have been driving a pair of
"them. I know it all now. The apparent im-
"possibility of getting each into its place, coupled
"with that craving for streets, so thoroughly put
"me off the track, that, up to Wednesday or
"Thursday last, I really contemplated, at times,
"the total abandonment of the Christmas book
"this year, and the limitation of my labours to
Cancelling. "*Dombey and Son!* I cancelled the beginning of
"a first scene—which I have never done before—
"and, with a notion in my head, ran wildly about
"and about it, and could not get the idea into
"any natural socket. At length, thank Heaven, I
Getting on. "nailed it all at once; and after going on com-
"fortably up to yesterday, and working yesterday
"from half-past nine to six, I was last night in
"such a state of enthusiasm about it that I think
"I was an inch or two taller. I am a little cooler
"to-day, with a headache to boot; but I really
"begin to hope you will think it a pretty story,
"with some delicate notions in it agreeably pre-
"sented, and with a good human Christmas ground-
"work. I fancy I see a great domestic effect in
"the last part."

Less hopeful.

That was written on the 20th of September;
but six days later changed the picture, and sur-
prised me not a little. I might grudge the space
thus given to one of the least important of his
books but that the illustration goes farther than
the little tale it refers to, and is a picture of him
in his moods of writing, with their weakness as
well as strength upon him, of a perfect truth and

applicability to every period of his life. Movement and change while he was working were not mere restlessness, as we have seen; it was no impatience of labour, or desire of pleasure, that led at such times to his eager craving for the fresh crowds and faces in which he might lose or find the creatures of his fancy; and recollecting this, much hereafter will be understood that might else be very far from clear, in regard to the sensitive conditions under which otherwise he carried on these exertions of his brain. "I am going to "write you" (26th of September) "a most startling "piece of intelligence. I fear there may be NO "CHRISTMAS BOOK! I would give the world to "be on the spot to tell you this. Indeed I once "thought of starting for London to-night. I have "written nearly a third of it. It promises to be "pretty; quite a new idea in the story, I hope; "but to manage it without the supernatural agency "now impossible of introduction, and yet to move "it naturally within the required space, or with "any shorter limit than a *Vicar of Wakefield*, I "find to be a difficulty so perplexing—the past "*Dombey* work taken into account—that I am "fearful of wearing myself out if I go on, and "not being able to come back to the greater "undertaking with the necessary freshness and "spirit. If I had nothing but the Christmas book "to do, I WOULD do it; but I get horrified and "distressed beyond conception at the prospect of "being jaded when I come back to the other, and "making it a mere race against time. I have

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Work under
sensitive
conditions.

Giving up
Christmas
book:

In alarm for
Dombey.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

The old crav-
ving.

Doubts and
misgivings.

Change of
scene to be
tried.

“written the first part; I know the end and up-
“shot of the second; and the whole of the third
“(there are only three in all). I know the purport
“of each character, and the plain idea that each
“is to work out; and I have the principal effects
“sketched on paper. It cannot end *quite* happily,
“but will end cheerfully and pleasantly. But my
“soul sinks before the commencement of the second
“part—the longest—and the introduction of the
“under-idea. (The main one already developed,
“with interest.) I don’t know how it is. I sup-
“pose it is the having been almost constantly at
“work in this quiet place; and the dread for the
“*Dombey*; and the not being able to get rid of it,
“in noise and bustle. The beginning two books
“together is also, no doubt, a fruitful source of
“the difficulty; for I am now sure I could not
“have invented the *Carol* at the commencement
“of the *Chuzzlewit*, or gone to a new book from
“the *Chimes*. But this is certain. I am sick,
“giddy, and capriciously despondent. I have bad
“nights; am full of disquietude and anxiety; and
“am constantly haunted by the idea that I am
“wasting the marrow of the larger book, and
“ought to be at rest. One letter that I wrote you
“before this, I have torn up. In that the Christmas
“book was wholly given up for this year: but I
“now resolve to make one effort more. I will go
“to Geneva to-morrow, and try on Monday and
“Tuesday whether I can get on at all bravely, in
“the changed scene. If I cannot, I am convinced
“that I had best hold my hand at once; and not

GENEVA:
1846.

"fritter my spirits and hope away, with that long
"book before me. You may suppose that the
"matter is very grave when I can so nearly
"abandon anything in which I am deeply inter-
"ested, and fourteen or fifteen close MS pages of
"which, that have made me laugh and cry, are
"lying in my desk. Writing this letter at all, I
"have a great misgiving that the letter I shall
"write you on Tuesday night will not make it
"better. Take it, for Heaven's sake, as an ex-
"tremely serious thing, and not a fancy of the
"moment. Last Saturday after a very long day's
"work, and last Wednesday after finishing the
"first part, I was full of eagerness and pleasure.
"At all other times since I began, I have been
"brooding and brooding over the idea that it was
"a wild thing to dream of, ever: and that I ought
"to be at rest for the *Dombey*."

The letter came, written on Wednesday not
Tuesday night, and it left the question still un-
settled. "When I came here" (Geneva, 30th of
September) "I had a blood-shot eye; and my
"head was so bad, with a pain across the brow,
"that I thought I must have got cupped. I have
"become a great deal better, however, and feel
"quite myself again to-day. . . . I still have not
"made up my mind as to what I CAN do with
"the Christmas book. I would give any money
"that it were possible to consult with you. I have
"begun the second part this morning, and have
"done a very fair morning's work at it, but I do
"not feel it *in hand* within the necessary space

GENEVA:
1846.

Disquietudes
of authorship.

Wanting
counsel.

At the worst.

"and divisions: and I have a great uneasiness in
 "the prospect of falling behind hand with the
 "other labour, which is so transcendently impor-
 "tant. I feel quite sure that unless I (being in
 "reasonably good state and spirits) like the
 "Christmas book myself, I had better not go on
 "with it; but had best keep my strength for *Dom-*
bey, and keep my number in advance. On the
 "other hand I am dreadfully averse to abandon-
 "ing it, and am so torn between the two things
 "that I know not what to do. It is impossible
 "to express the wish I have that I could take
 "counsel with you. Having begun the second
 "part I will go on here, to-morrow and Friday
 "(Saturday, the Talfourds come to us at Lausanne,
 "leaving on Monday morning), unless I see new
 "reason to give it up in the meanwhile. Let it
 "stand thus—that my next Monday's letter shall
 "finally decide the question. But if you have
 "not already told Bradbury and Evans of my last
 "letter I think it will now be best to do so. . . .
 "This non-publication of a Christmas book, if it
 "must be, I try to think light of with the greater
 "story just begun, and with this *Battle of Life*
 "story (of which I really think the leading idea
 "is very pretty) lying by me, for future use. But
 "I would like you to consider, in the event of
 "my not going on, how best, by timely announce-
 "ment, in November's or December's *Dombey*, I
 "may seem to hold the ground prospectively. . . .
 "Heaven send me a good deliverance! If I don't
 "do it, it will be the first time I ever abandoned

GENEVA:
1846.Shadows
from *Dombey*.

“anything I had once taken in hand; and I shall
 “not have abandoned it until after a most des-
 “perate fight. I could do it, but for the *Dombey*,
 “as easily as I did last year or the year before.
 “But I cannot help falling back on that con-
 “tinually: and this, combined with the peculiar
 “difficulties of the story for a Christmas book,
 “and my being out of sorts, discourages me
 “sadly. . . . Kate is here, and sends her love.” . . .
 A postscript was added on the following day.
 “Georgy has come over from Lausanne, and joins
 “with Kate, &c. &c. My head remains greatly
 “better. My eye is recovering its old hue of
 “beautiful white, tinged with celestial blue. If I
 “hadn’t come here, I think I should have had
 “some bad low fever. The sight of the rushing
 “Rhône seemed to stir my blood again. I don’t
 “think I shall want to be cupped, this bout; but
 “it looked, at one time, worse than I have con-
 “fessed to you. If I have any return, I will have
 “it done immediately.”

More hopeful.

He stayed two days longer at Geneva, which
 he found to be a very good place; pleasantly re-
 porting himself as quite dismayed at first by the
 sight of gas in it, and as trembling at the noise
 in its streets, which he pronounced to be fully
 equal to the uproar of Richmond in Surrey; but
 deriving from it some sort of benefit both in
 health and in writing. So far his trip had been
 successful, though he had to leave the place hur-
 riedly to welcome his English visitors to Rose-
 mont.

Report of the
city.

GENEVA:
1846.

A new social
experience.

Mother and
daughter.

Eccentri-
cities.

One social and very novel experience he had in his hotel, however, the night before he left, which may be told before he hastens back to Lausanne; for it could hardly now offend any one even if the names were given. "And now "sir I will describe, modestly, tamely, literally, "the visit to the small select circle which I pro- "mised should make your hair stand on end. In "our hotel were Lady A, and Lady B, mother "and daughter, who came to the Peschiere shortly "before we left it, and who have a deep admira- "tion for your humble servant the inimitable B. "They are both very clever. Lady B, extremely "well-informed in languages, living and dead; "books, and gossip; very pretty; with two little "children, and not yet five and twenty. Lady A, "plump, fresh, and rosy; matronly, but full of "spirits and good looks. Nothing would serve "them but we *must* dine with them; and accord- "ingly, on Friday at six, we went down to their "room. I knew them to be rather odd. For "instance, I have known Lady A, *full dressed*, "walk alone through the streets of Genoa, the "squalid Italian bye streets, to the Governor's "soirée; and announce herself at the palace of "state, by knocking at the door. I have also met "Lady B, full dressed, without any cap or bon- "net, walking a mile to the opera, with all sorts "of jingling jewels about her, beside a sedan "chair in which sat enthroned her mama. Con- "sequently, I was not surprised at such little "sparkles in the conversation (from the young

"lady) as 'Oh God what a sermon we had here, GENEVA:
"last Sunday!' 'And did you ever read such 1846.
"infernally trash as Mrs. Gore's?'—and the like. A ladies' dinner.
"Still, but for Kate and Georgy (who were de-
"cidedly in the way, as we agreed afterwards), I
"should have thought it all very funny; and, as
"it was, I threw the ball back again, was mighty
"free and easy, made some rather broad jokes,
"and was highly applauded. 'You smoke, don't
"you?' said the young lady, in a pause of this
"kind of conversation. 'Yes,' I said, 'I generally
"take a cigar after dinner when I am alone.'
"I'll give you a good 'un,' said she, 'when we
"go up-stairs.' Well, sir, in due course we went
"up stairs, and there we were joined by an
"American lady residing in the same hotel, who American
"looked like what we call in old England 'a reinforce-
"reg'lar Bunter'—fluffy face (rouged); consider-
"able development of figure; one groggy eye;
"blue satin dress made low with short sleeves,
"and shoes of the same. Also a daughter; face
"likewise fluffy; figure likewise developed; dress
"likewise low, with short sleeves, and shoes of
"the same; and one eye not yet actually groggy,
"but going to be. American lady married at six-
"teen; daughter sixteen now, often mistaken for
"sisters, &c. &c. &c. When that was over, Lady B
"brought out a cigar box, and gave me a cigar,
"made of negrohead she said, which would quell
"an elephant in six whiffs. The box was full of Elephant-
"cigarettes—good large ones, made of pretty quellers.
"strong tobacco; I always smoke them here, and

GENEVA:
1846.

Feminine
smoking
party.

Modesty
of sex.

A novel
experience.

"used to smoke them at Genoa, and I knew them well. When I lighted my cigar. Lady B lighted hers, at mine; leaned against the mantelpiece, in conversation with me; put out her stomach, folded her arms, and with her pretty face cocked up sideways and her cigarette smoking away like a Manchester cotton mill, laughed, and talked, and smoked, in the most gentlemanly manner I ever beheld. Lady A immediately lighted her cigar; American lady immediately lighted hers; and in five minutes the room was a cloud of smoke, with us four in the centre pulling away bravely, while American lady related stories of her 'Hookah' up stairs, and described different kinds of pipes. But even this was not all. For presently two Frenchmen came in, with whom, and the American lady, Lady B sat down to whist. The Frenchmen smoked of course (they were really modest gentlemen, and seemed dismayed), and Lady B played for the next hour or two with a cigar continually in her mouth—never out of it. She certainly smoked six or eight. Lady A gave in soon—I think she only did it out of vanity. American lady had been smoking all the morning. I took no more; and Lady B and the Frenchmen had it all to themselves.

"Conceive this in a great hotel, with not only their own servants, but half a dozen waiters coming constantly in and out! I showed no atom of surprise; but I never *was* so surprised, so ridiculously taken aback, in my life; for in

"all my experience of 'ladies' of one kind and
"another, I never saw a woman—not a basket
"woman or a gipsy—smoke, before!" He lived
to have larger and wider experience, but there
was enough to startle as well as amuse him in
the scene described.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

But now Saturday is come; he has hurried
back for the friends who are on their way to his
cottage; and on his arrival, even before they have
appeared, he writes to tell me his better news of
himself and his work.

"In the breathless interval" (Rosemont: 3rd
"of October) between our return from Geneva
"and the arrival of the Talfourds (expected in an
"hour or two), I cannot do better than write to
"you. For I think you will be well pleased if I
"anticipate my promise, and Monday, at the same
"time. I have been greatly better at Geneva,
"though I still am made uneasy by occasional
"giddiness and headache: attributable, I have not
"the least doubt to the absence of streets. There
"is an idea here, too, that people are occasionally
"made despondent and sluggish in their spirits
"by this great mass of still water, lake Lemán.
"At any rate I have been very uncomfortable: at
"any rate I am, I hope, greatly better: and (lastly)
"at any rate I hope and trust, *now*, the Christmas
"book will come in due course!! I have had
"three very good days' work at Geneva, and trust
"I may finish the second part (the third is the
"shortest) by this day week. Whenever I finish
"it, I will send you the first two together. I do

Visit of the
Talfourds.

In better
heart.

Christmas
book re-
sumed.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Lodging his
friends.

Intentions
and hope.

Thomas Noon
Talfourd.

"not think they can begin to illustrate it, until
"the third arrives; for it is a single-minded story,
"as it were, and an artist should know the end:
"which I don't think very likely, unless he reads
"it." Then, after relating a superhuman effort
he was making to lodge his visitors in his doll's
house ("I didn't like the idea of turning them
"out at night. It is so dark in these lanes, and
"groves, when the moon's not bright"), he sketched
for me what he possibly might, and really did,
accomplish. He would by great effort finish the
small book on the 20th; would fly to Geneva for
a week to work a little at *Dombey*, if he felt
"pretty sound;" in any case would finish his
number three by the 10th of November; and on
that day would start for Paris: "so that, instead
"of resting unprofitably here, I shall be using my
"interval of idleness to make the journey and get
"into a new house, and shall hope so to put a
"pinch of salt on the tail of the sliding number
"in advance. . . . I am horrified at the idea
"of getting the blues (and bloodshots) again."
Though I did not then know how gravely ill he
had been, I was fain to remind him that it was
bad economy to make business out of rest itself;
but I received prompt confirmation that all was
falling out as he wished. The Talfourds stayed
two days: "and I think they were very happy.
"He was in his best aspect; the manner so well
"known to us, not the less loveable for being
"laughable; and if you could have seen him
"going round and round the coach that brought

"them, as a preliminary to paying the voiturier
"to whom he couldn't speak, in a currency he
"didn't understand, you never would have for-
"gotten it." His friends left Lausanne on the
5th; and five days later he sent me two thirds of
the manuscript of his Christmas book.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

REVOLUTION AT GENEVA, CHRISTMAS BOOK, AND
LAST DAYS IN SWITZERLAND.

1846.

LAUSANNE:
1846.
An arrival
of MS.

A title.

"I SEND you in twelve letters, counting this
"as one, the first two parts (thirty-five slips) of
"the Christmas book. I have two present anxieties
"respecting it. One to know that you have re-
"ceived it safely; and the second to know how it
"strikes you. Be sure you read the first and
"second parts together There seems to me
"to be interest in it, and a pretty idea; and it is
"unlike the others . . . There will be some minor
"points for consideration: as, the necessity for
"some slight alterations in one or two of the
"Doctor's speeches in the first part; and whether
"it should be called 'The Battle of Life. A
"Love Story'—to express both a love story in
"the common acceptation of the phrase, and also
"a story of love; with one or two other things of
"that sort. We can moot these by and by. I
"made a tremendous day's work of it yesterday
"and was horribly excited—so I am going to rush
"out, as fast as I can: being a little used up, and

"sick . . . But never say die! I have been to the glass to look at my eye. Pretty bright!"

LAUSANNE:
1846.

I made it brighter next day by telling him that the first number of *Dombey* had outstripped in sale the first of *Chuzzlewit* by more than

Large sale of
Dombey.

twelve thousand copies; and his next letter, sending the close of his little tale, showed his need of the comfort my pleasant news had given him. "I really do not know what this story is

"worth. I am so floored: wanting sleep, and

"never having had my head free from it for this

"month past. I think there are some places in

"this last part which I may bring better together

Christmas
book done.

"in the proof, and where a touch or two may be

"of service; particularly in the scene between

"Craggs and Michael Warden, where, as it

"stands, the interest seems anticipated. But I

"shall have the benefit of your suggestions, and

"my own then cooler head, I hope; and I will

Points in the
story.

"be very careful with the proofs, and keep them

"by me as long as I can . . . Mr. Britain must

"have another Christian name, then? 'Aunt

"'Martha' is the Sally of whom the Doctor speaks

"in the first part. Martha is a better name. What

"do you think of the concluding paragraph?

"Would you leave it for happiness' sake? It is

"merely experimental . . . I am flying to Geneva

"to-morrow morning." (That was on the 18th of

October; and on the 20th he wrote from

Geneva.) "We came here yesterday, and we shall

GENEVA.

"probably remain until Katey's birthday, which

"is next Thursday week. I shall fall to work on

GENEVA:
1846.

Back to
Dombey.

"number three of *Dombey* as soon as I can. At present I am the worse for wear, but nothing like as much so as I expected to be on Sunday last. I had not been able to sleep for some time, and had been hammering away, morning, noon, and night. A bottle of hock on Monday, when Elliotson dined with us (he went away homeward yesterday morning), did me a world of good; the change comes in the very nick of time; and I feel in Dombeyan spirits already ... But I have still rather a damaged head, aching a good deal occasionally, as it is doing now, though I have not been cupped—yet ... I dreamed all last week that the *Battle of Life* was a series of chambers impossible to be got to rights or got out of, through which I wandered drearily all night. On Saturday night I don't think I slept an hour. I was perpetually roaming through the story, and endeavouring to dovetail the revolution here into the plot. The mental distress, quite horrible."

Remains of
over-work.

Rising against
the Jesuits.

Of the "revolution" he had written to me a week before, from Lausanne; where the news had just reached them, that, upon the Federal Diet decreeing the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Roman Catholic cantons had risen against the decree, the result being that the Protestants had deposed the grand council and established a provisional government, dissolving the Catholic league. His interest in this, and prompt seizure of what really was brought into issue by the conflict, is every way characteristic of Dickens. "You will know,"

LAUSANNE.

he wrote from Lausanne on the 11th of October, "long before you get this, all about the revolution "at Geneva. There were stories of plots against "the Government when I was there, but I didn't "believe them; for all sorts of lies are always "afloat against the radicals, and wherever there "is a consul from a Catholic Power the most mon- "strous fictions are in perpetual circulation against "them: as in this very place, where the Sardinian "consul was gravely whispering the other day "that a society called the Homicides had been "formed, whereof the president of the council of "state, the O'Connell of Switzerland and a clever "fellow, was a member; who were sworn on "skulls and cross-bones to exterminate men of "property, and so forth. There was a great stir "here, on the day of the fight in Geneva. We "heard the guns (they shook this house) all day; "and seven hundred men marched out of this "town of Lausanne to go and help the radical "party—arriving at Geneva just after it was all "over. There is no doubt they had received "secret help from here; for a powder barrel, "found by some of the Genevese populace with "'Canton de Vaud' painted on it, was carried "on a pole about the streets as a standard, to "show that they were sympathized with by friends "outside. It was a poor mean fight enough, I am "told by Lord Vernon, who was present and "who was with us last night. The Government "was afraid; having no confidence whatever, I "dare say, in its own soldiers; and the cannon

LAUSANNE:
1846.

The fight in
Geneva.

An eye-
witness.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Rifle against
cannon.

Precision of
aim.

The true
objection to
Roman Ca-
tholicism.

"were fired everywhere except at the opposite party, who (I mean the revolutionists) had barricaded a bridge with an omnibus only, and certainly in the beginning might have been turned with ease. The precision of the common men with the rifle was especially shown by a small party of *five*, who waited on the ramparts near one of the gates of the town, to turn a body of soldiery who were coming in to the Government assistance. They picked out every officer and struck him down instantly, the moment the party appeared; there were three or four of them; upon which the soldiers gravely turned round and walked off. I dare say there are not fifty men in this place who wouldn't click your card off a target a hundred and fifty yards away, at least. I have seen them, time after time, fire across a great ravine as wide as the ornamental ground in St. James's-park, and never miss the bull's-eye.

"It is a horribly ungentlemanly thing to say here, though I *do* say it without the least reserve—but my sympathy is all with the radicals. I don't know any subject on which this indomitable people have so good a right to a strong feeling as Catholicity—if not as a religion, clearly as a means of social degradation. They know what it is. They live close to it. They have Italy beyond their mountains. They can compare the effect of the two systems at any time in their own valleys; and their dread of it, and their horror of the introduction of Catholic

GENEVA:
1846.

“priests and emissaries into their towns, seems
 “to me the most rational feeling in the world.
 “Apart from this, you have no conception of the
 “preposterous, insolent little aristocracy of Geneva: Genevèse
 “the most ridiculous caricature the fancy can sug- “aristo-
 “cracy.”
 “gest of what we know in England. I was talking
 “to two famous gentlemen (very intelligent men)
 “of that place, not long ago, who came over to
 “invite me to a sort of reception there—which I
 “declined. Really their talk about ‘the people’ and
 “‘the masses,’ and the necessity they would shortly
 “be under of shooting a few of them as an example
 “for the rest, was a kind of monstrosity one might
 “have heard at Genoa. The audacious insolence
 “and contempt of the people by their newspapers,
 “too, is quite absurd. It is difficult to believe
 “that men of sense can be such donkeys politi-
 “cally. It was precisely such a state of things
 “that brought about the change here. There was
 “a most respectful petition presented on the
 “Jesuit question, signed by its tens of thousands Swiss
 “of small farmers; the regular peasants of the “rabble.”
 “canton, all splendidly taught in public schools,
 “and intellectually as well as physically a most
 “remarkable body of labouring men. This docu-
 “ment is treated by the gentlemanly party with
 “the most sublime contempt, and the signatures
 “are said to be [the signatures of ‘the rabble.’
 “Upon which, each man of the rabble shoulders A lesson.
 “his rifle, and walks in upon a given day agreed
 “upon among them to Lausanne; and the gentle-
 “manly party walk out without striking a blow.”

GENEVA:
1846.

Traces left by
revolution.

The streets.

The people.

Abettors of
revolution.

Such traces of the "revolution" as he found upon his present visit to Geneva he described in writing to me from the hotel de l'Ecu on the 20th of October. "You never would suppose from the look of this town that there had been anything revolutionary going on. Over the window of my old bedroom there is a great hole made by a cannon-ball in the house-front; and two of the bridges are under repair. But these are small tokens which anything else might have brought about as well. The people are all at work. The little streets are rife with every sight and sound of industry; the place is as quiet by ten o'clock as Lincoln's-inn-fields; and the only outward and visible sign of public interest in political events is a little group at every street corner, reading a public announcement from the new Government of the forthcoming election of state-officers, in which the people are reminded of their importance as a republican institution, and desired to bear in mind their dignity in all their proceedings. Nothing very violent or bad could go on with a community so well educated as this. It is the best antidote to American experiences, conceivable. As to the nonsense 'the gentlemanly interest' talk about, their opposition to property and so forth, there never was such mortal absurdity. One of the principal leaders in the late movement has a stock of watches and jewellery here of immense value—and had, during the disturbance—perfectly unprotected. James Fahzey has a rich house and a valuable collec-

"tion of pictures; and, I will be bound to say,
 "twice as much to lose as half the conservative
 "declaimers put together. This house, the liberal
 "one, is one of the most richly furnished and
 "luxurious hotels on the continent. And if I were
 "a Swiss with a hundred thousand pounds, I
 "would be as steady against the Catholic cantons
 "and the propagation of Jesuitism as any radical
 "among 'em: believing the dissemination of Ca-
 "tholicity to be the most horrible means of political
 "and social degradation left in the world. Which
 "these people, thoroughly well educated, know
 "perfectly . . . The boys of Geneva were very use-
 "ful in bringing materials for the construction of
 "the barricades on the bridges; and the enclosed
 "song may amuse you. They sing it to a tune
 "that dates from the great French revolution—a
 "very good one."

GENEVA:
1846.

Where the
shoe pinches.

But revolutions may be small as well as their
 heroes, and while he thus was sending me his
 Gamin de Genève I was sending him news of a
 sudden change in Whitefriars which had quite as
 vivid interest for him. Not much could be told
 him at first, but his curiosity instantly arose to
 fever pitch. "In reference to that *Daily News* re-
 "volution," he wrote from Geneva on the 26th,
 "I have been walking and wandering all day
 "through a perfect Miss Burney's Vauxhall of con-
 "jectural dark walks. Heaven send you enlighten
 "me fully on Wednesday, or number three will
 "suffer!" Two days later he resumed, as he was
 beginning his journey back to Lausanne. "I am

Smaller re-
volution in
Whitefriars.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Daily News
changes.

His pleasure
at my sur-
render of
editorship.

Thoughts for
the future.

"in a great state of excitement on account of your intelligence, and desperately anxious to know all about it. I shall be put out to an unspeakable extent if I don't find your letter awaiting me. God knows there has been small comfort for either of us in the *D. N.*'s nine months." There was not much to tell then, and there is less now; but at last the discomfort was over for us both, as I had been unable to reconcile myself to a longer continuance of the service I had given in Whitefriars since he quitted it. The subject may be left with the remark made upon it in his first letter after returning to Rosemont. "I certainly am very glad of the result of the *Daily News* business, though my gladness is dashed with melancholy to think that you should have toiled there so long, to so little purpose. I escaped more easily. However, it is all past now... As to the undoubted necessity of the course you took, I have not a grain of question in my mind. That, being what you are, you had only one course to take and have taken it, I no more doubt than that the Old Bailey is not Westminster Abbey. In the utmost sum at which you value yourself, you were bound to leave; and now you *have* left, you will come to Paris, and there, and at home again, we'll have, please God, the old kind of evenings and the old life again, as it used to be before those daily nooses caught us by the legs and sometimes tripped us up. Make a vow (as I have done) never to go down that court with the little news-shop at the corner,

"any more, and let us swear by Jack Straw as in
 "the ancient times. . . I am beginning to get over
 "my sorrow for your nights up aloft in White-
 "friars, and to feel nothing but happiness in the
 "contemplation of your enfranchisement. God
 "bless you!"

LAUSANNE:
 1846.

The time was now shortening for him at Lau-
 sanne; but before my sketches of his pleasant days
 there close, the little story of his Christmas book
 may be made complete by a few extracts from the
 letters that followed immediately upon the depar-
 ture of the Talfourds. Without comment they will
 explain its closing touches, his own consciousness
 of the difficulties in working out the tale within
 limits too confined not to render its proper de-
 velopment imperfect, and his ready tact in dealing
 with objection and suggestion from without. His
 condition while writing it did not warrant me in
 pressing what I might otherwise have thought ne-
 cessary; but as the little story finally left his hands,
 it had points not unworthy of him; and a sketch
 of its design will render the fragments from his
 letters more intelligible. I read it lately with a
 sense that its general tone of quiet beauty deserved
 well the praise which Jeffrey in those days had
 given it. "I like and admire the *Battle* extremely,"
 he said in a letter on its publication, sent me
 by Dickens and not included in Lord Cock-
 burn's Memoir. "It is better than any other man
 "alive could have written, and has passages as
 "fine as anything that ever came from the man
 "himself. The dance of the sisters in that autumn

Letters about
 his *Battle of*
Life.

Character
 of it.

Jeffrey's
 opinion.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

"orchard is of itself worth a dozen inferior tales, and their reunion at the close, and indeed all the serious parts, are beautiful, some traits of "Clemency charming."

The *Battle*
of *Life*.

Sketch of
story.

Yet it was probably here the fact, as with the *Chimes*, that the serious parts were too much interwoven with the tale to render the subject altogether suitable to the old mirth-bringing season; but this had also some advantages. The story is all about two sisters, the younger of whom, Marion, sacrifices her own affection to give happiness to the elder, Grace. But Grace had already made the same sacrifice for this younger sister; life's first and hardest battle had been won by her before the incidents begin; and when she is first seen, she is busying herself to bring about her sister's marriage with Alfred Heathfield, whom she has herself loved, and whom she has kept wholly unconscious, by a quiet change in her bearing to him, of what his own still disengaged heart would certainly not have rejected. Marion, however, had earlier discovered this, though it is not until her victory over herself that Alfred knows it; and meanwhile he is become her betrothed. The sisters thus shown at the opening, one believing her love undiscovered and the other bent for the sake of that love on surrendering her own, each practising concealment and both unselfishly true, form a pretty and tender picture. The second part is intended to give to Marion's flight the character of an elopement; and so to manage this as to show her all the time unchanged to the man she

is pledged to, yet flying from, was the author's difficulty. One Michael Warden is the *deus ex machinâ* by whom it is solved, hardly with the usual skill; but there is much art in rendering his pretensions to the hand of Marion, whose husband he becomes after an interval of years, the means of closing against him all hope of success, in the very hour when her own act might seem to be opening it to him. During the same interval Grace, believing Marion to be gone with Warden, becomes Alfred's wife; and not until reunion after six years' absence is the truth entirely known to her. The struggle, to all of them, has been filled and chastened with sorrow; but joy revisits them at its close. Hearts are not broken by the duties laid upon them; nor is life shown to be such a perishable holiday, that amidst noble sorrow and generous self-denial it must lose its capacity for happiness. The tale thus justifies its place in the Christmas series. What Jeffrey says of Clemency, too, may suggest another word. The story would not be Dickens's if we could not discover in it the power peculiar to him of presenting the commonest objects with freshness and beauty, of detecting in the homeliest forms of life much of its rarest loveliness, and of springing easily upward from everyday realities into regions of imaginative thought. To this happiest direction of his art, Clemency and her husband render new tribute; and in her more especially, once again, we recognize one of those true souls who fill so large a space in his writings, for whom the lowest seats

LAUSANNE:
1846.

*The Battle of
Life.*

Difficulty in
plot.

Old char-
acteristics.

LAUSANNE: at life's feast are commonly kept, but whom he
 1846.
The Battle of moves and welcomes to a more fitting place among
Life. the prized and honoured at the upper tables.

**His own
 comments.**

"I wonder whether you foresaw the end of
 "the Christmas book! There are two or three
 "places in which I can make it prettier, I think,
 "by slight alterations. . . . I trust to Heaven you
 "may like it. What an affecting story I could
 "have made of it in one octavo volume. Oh to
 "think of the printers transforming my kindly
 "cynical old father into Doctor Taddler!" (28th
 of October.)

Date of story.

"Do you think it worth while in the illustra-
 "tions, to throw the period back at all for the
 "sake of anything good in the costume? The story
 "may have happened at any time within a hun-
 "dred years. Is it worth having coats and gowns
 "of dear old Goldsmith's day? or thereabouts? I
 "really don't know what to say. The probability
 "is, if it has not occurred to you or to the artists,
 "that it is hardly worth considering; but I ease
 "myself of it by throwing it out to you. It may
 "be already too late, or you may see reason to
 "think it best to 'stick to the *last*' (I feel it neces-
 "sary to italicize the joke), and abide by the
 "'ladies' and gentlemen's spring and winter fashions
 "of this time. Whatever you think best, in this
 "as in all other things, is best, I am sure . . . I
 "would go, in the illustrations, for 'beauty' as

“much as possible; and I should like each part
 “to have a general illustration to it at the be-
 “ginning, shadowing out its drift and bearing:
 “much as Browne goes at that kind of thing on
 “*Dombey* covers. I don’t think I should fetter
 “your discretion in the matter farther. The better
 “it is illustrated, the better I shall be pleased of
 “course.” (29th of October.)

LAUSANNE:
1846.

*The Battle of
Life.*

“... I only write to say that it is of no use
 “my writing at length, until I have heard from
 “you; and that I will wait until I shall have read
 “your promised communication (as my father would
 “call it) to-morrow. I have glanced over the
 “proofs of the last part and really don’t wonder,
 “some of the most extravagant mistakes occur-
 “ring in Clemency’s account to Warden, that the
 “marriage of Grace and Alfred should seem rather
 “unsatisfactory to you. Whatever is done about
 “that must be done with the lightest hand, for
 “the reader MUST take something for granted;
 “but I think it next to impossible, without dread-
 “ful injury to the effect, to introduce a scene
 “between Marion and Michael. The introduction
 “must be in the scene between the sisters, and
 “must be put, mainly, into the mouth of Grace.
 “Rely upon it there is no other way, in keeping
 “with the spirit of the tale. With this amend-
 “ment, and a touch here and there in the last
 “part (I know exactly where they will come best),

Reply to
criticism.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

*The Battle of
Life.*

"I think it may be pretty and affecting, and comfortable too . . ." (31st of October.)

Stanfield's
offer of illustrations.

" . . . I shall hope to touch upon the Christmas book as soon as I get your opinion. I wouldn't do it without. I am delighted to hear of noble old Stanny. Give my love to him, and tell him I think of turning Catholic. It strikes me (it may have struck you perhaps) that another good place for introducing a few lines of dialogue, is at the beginning of the scene between Grace and her husband, where he speaks about the messenger at the gate." (4th of November.)

"Before I reply to your questions I wish to remark generally of the third part that all the passion that can be got into it, through my interpretation at all events, is there. I know that, by what it cost me; and I take it to be, as a question of art and interest, in the very nature of the story that it *should* move at a swift pace after the sisters are in each other's arms again. Anything after that would drag like lead, and must. . . . Now for your questions. I don't think any little scene with Marion and anybody can prepare the way for the last paragraph of the tale: I don't think anything but a printer's line can go between it and Warden's speech. A less period than ten years? Yes. I see no objection to six. I have no doubt you are right. Any

"word from Alfred in his misery? Impossible: LAUSANNE: 1846.
 "you might as well try to speak to somebody in The Battle of
 "an express train. The preparation for his change Life.
 "is in the first part, and he kneels down beside Doubts of
 "her in that return scene. He is left alone with third part.
 "her, as it were, in the world. I am quite con-
 "fident it is wholly impossible for me to alter
 "that... BUT (keep your eye on me) when Marion
 "went away, she left a letter for Grace in which
 "she charged her to encourage the love that
 "Alfred would conceive for her, and FOREWARNED
 "her that years would pass before they met
 "again, &c. &c. This coming out in the scene Strengthen-
 "between the sisters, and something like it being ing the close.
 "expressed in the opening of the little scene
 "between Grace and her husband before the
 "messenger at the gate, will make (I hope) a
 "prodigious difference; and I will try to put in
 "something with Aunt Martha and the Doctor
 "which shall carry the tale back more distinctly
 "and unmistakeably to the battle-ground. I hope
 "to make these alterations next week, and to send
 "the third part back to you before I leave here.
 "If you think it can still be improved after that, Farther ob-
 "say so to me in Paris and I will go at it again. jection in-
 "I wouldn't have it limp, if it can fly. I say vited.
 "nothing to you of a great deal of this being
 "already expressed in the sentiment of the be-
 "ginning, because your delicate perception knows
 "all that already. Observe for the artists. Grace
 "will now only have *one child*—little Marion." . . .
 (At night, on same day.) . . . "You recollect that I

LAUSANNE:
1846.

*The Battle of
Life.*

"asked you to read it all together, for I knew that
"I was working for that? But I have no doubt
"of *your* doubts, and will do what I have said....
"I had thought of marking the time in the little
"story, and will do so. . . Think, once more, of
"the period between the second and third parts.
"I will do the same." (7th of November.)

Tendency to
blank verse.

"I hope you will think the third part (when
"you read it in type with these amendments) very
"much improved. "I think it so. If there should
"still be anything wanting, in your opinion, pray
"suggest it to me in Paris. I am bent on having
"it right, if I can. . . If in going over the proofs
"you find the tendency to blank verse (*I cannot*
"help it, when I am very much in earnest) too
"strong, knock out a word's brains here and
"there." (13th of November. Sending the proofs
back.)

Dedication.

". . . Your Christmas book illustration-news
"makes me jump for joy. I will write you at
"length to-morrow. I should like this dedication:
"This Christmas Book is cordially inscribed To
"my English Friends in Switzerland. Just those
"two lines, and nothing more. When I get the
"proofs again I think I may manage another word
"or two about the battle-field, with advantage. I
"am glad you like the alterations. I feel that
"they make it complete, and that it would have

"been incomplete without your suggestions." LAUSANNE: 1846.
(21st of November. From Paris.)

I had managed, as a glad surprise for him, to Artists. enlist both Stanfield and Maclise in the illustration of the story, in addition to the distinguished artists whom the publishers had engaged for it, Leech and Richard Doyle; and among the subjects contributed by Stanfield are three morsels Stanfield's designs. of English landscape which had a singular charm for Dickens at the time, and seem to me still of their kind quite faultless. I may add a curious fact, never mentioned until now. In the illustration which closes the second part of the story, where the festivities to welcome the bridegroom at the top of the page contrast with the flight of the bride represented below, Leech made the Grave mistake by Leech. mistake of supposing that Michael Warden had taken part in the elopement, and has introduced his figure with that of Marion. We did not discover this until too late for remedy, the publication having then been delayed, for these drawings, to the utmost limit; and it is highly characteristic of Dickens, and of the true regard he had for this fine artist, that, knowing the pain he must How dealt with by C. D. give in such circumstances by objection or complaint, he preferred to pass it silently. Nobody made remark upon it, and there the illustration still stands; but any one who reads the tale carefully will at once perceive what havoc it makes of one of the most delicate turns in it.

"When I first saw it, it was with a horror and His first impulse.
"agony not to be expressed. Of course I need

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Kindly after-
thought.

"not tell *you*, my dear fellow, Warden has no business in the elopement scene. *He* was never there! In the first hot sweat of this surprise and novelty, I was going to implore the printing of that sheet to be stopped, and the figure taken out of the block. But when I thought of the pain this might give to our kind-hearted Leech; and that what is such a monstrous enormity to me, as never having entered my brain, may not so present itself to others, I became more composed; though the fact is wonderful to me. No doubt a great number of copies will be printed by the time this reaches you, and therefore I shall take it for granted that it stands as it is. Leech otherwise is very good, and the illustrations altogether are by far the best that have been done for any of the Christmas books. You know how I build up temples in my mind that are not made with hands (or expressed with pen and ink, I am afraid), and how liable I am to be disappointed in these things. But I really am *not* disappointed in this case. Quietness and beauty are preserved throughout. Say everything to Mac and Stanny, more than everything! It is a delight to look at these little landscapes of the dear old boy. How gentle and elegant, and yet how manly and vigorous, they are! I have a perfect joy in them."

Last days in
Switzerland.

Of the few days that remained of his Lausanne life, before he journeyed to Paris, there is not much requiring to be said. His work had continued during the whole of the month before

LAUSANNE:
1846.

departure to occupy him so entirely as to leave room for little else, and even occasional letters to very dear friends at home were intermitted. Here is one example of many. "I will write to Landor as soon as I can possibly make time, "but I really am so much at my desk perforce, "and so full of work, whether I am there or elsewhere, between the Christmas book and *Dombey*, "that it is the most difficult thing in the world "for me to make up my mind to write a letter to "any one but you. I ought to have written to "Macready. I wish you would tell him, with my "love, how I am situated in respect of pen, ink, "and paper. One of the Lausanne papers, treating of free trade, has been very copious lately "in its mention of LORD GOBDEN. Fact; and I "think it a good name." Then, as the inevitable time approached, he cast about him for such comfort as the coming change might bring, to set against the sorrow of it; and began to think of Paris, "in a less romantic and more homely contemplation of the picture," as not wholly undesirable. "I have no doubt that constant change, "too, is indispensable to me when I am at work: "and at times something more than a doubt will "force itself upon me whether there is not something in a Swiss valley that disagrees with me. "Certainly, whenever I live in Switzerland again, "it shall be on the hill-top. Something of the "*goître* and *cretin* influence seems to settle on "my spirits sometimes, on the lower ground.*

Engagements.

Lord Gobden
and free
trade.

Needs while
at work.

* "I may tell you," he wrote to me from Paris at the

LAUSANNE!
1846.

"How sorry, ah yes! how sorry I shall be to leave the little society nevertheless. We have been thoroughly good-humoured and agreeable together, and I'll always give a hurrah for the Swiss and Switzerland."

Mountain
winds.

One or two English travelling by Lausanne had meanwhile greeted him as they were passing home, and a few days given him by Elliotson had been an enjoyment without a drawback. It was now the later autumn, very high winds were coursing through the valley, and his last letter but one described the change which these approaches of winter were making in the scene. "We have had some tremendous hurricanes at Lausanne. It is an extraordinary place now for wind, being peculiarly situated among mountains—between the Jura, and the Simplon, St. Gothard, St. Bernard, and Mont Blanc ranges; and at night you would swear (lying in bed) you were at sea. You cannot imagine wind blowing so, over earth. It is very fine to hear. The weather generally, however, has been excellent. There is snow on the tops of nearly all the hills, but

Pleasures of
autumn.

end of November, "now it is all over. I don't know whether it was the hot summer, or the anxiety of the two new books coupled with D. N. remembrances and reminders, but I was in that state in Switzerland, when my spirits sunk so, I felt myself in serious danger. Yet I had little pain in my side; excepting that time at Genoa I have hardly had any since poor Mary died, when it came on so badly; and I walked my fifteen miles a day constantly, at a great pace."

"none has fallen in the valley. On a bright day,
"it is quite hot between eleven and half past
"two. The nights and mornings are cold. For
"the last two or three days, it has been thick
"weather; and I can see no more of Mont Blanc
"from where I am writing now than if I were in
"Devonshire-terrace, though last week it bounded
"all the Lausanne walks. I would give a great
"deal that you could take a walk with me about
"Lausanne on a clear cold day. It is impossible
"to imagine anything more noble and beautiful
"than the scene; and the autumn colours in the
"foliage are more brilliant and vivid now than
"any description could convey to you. I took
"Elliotson, when he was with us, up to a ravine
"I had found out in the hills eight hundred or a
"thousand feet deep! Its steep sides dyed bright
"yellow, and deep red, by the changing leaves;
"a sounding torrent roaring down below; the lake
"of Geneva lying at its foot; one enormous mass
"and chaos of trees at its upper end; and moun-
"tain piled on mountain in the distance, up into
"the sky! He really was struck silent by its
"majesty and splendour."

LAUSANNE:
1846.

A ravine in
the hills.

He had begun his third number of *Dombey* on the 26th of October, on the 4th of the following month he was half through it, on the 7th he was in "the agonies" of its last chapter, and on the 9th, one day before that proposed for its completion, all was done. This was marvellously rapid work, after what else he had undergone; but within a week, Monday the 16th being the day

POST FOR
PARIS:
1846.

Striking
tents.

Sadness of
leave-taking.

Page 272 of
Vol. III.

Travelling to
Paris.

for departure, they were to strike their tents, and troubled and sad were the few days thus left him for preparation and farewell. He included in his leave-taking his deaf, dumb, and blind friends; and, to use his own homely phrase, was yet more terribly "down in the mouth" at taking leave of his hearing, speaking, and seeing friends. "I shall see you soon, please God, and that sets all to rights. But I don't believe there are many dots on the map of the world where we shall have left such affectionate remembrances behind us, as in Lausanne. It was quite miserable this last night, when we left them at Haldimand's."

He shall himself describe how they travelled post to Paris, occupying five days. "We got through the journey charmingly, though not quite so quickly as we hoped. The children as good as usual, and even Skittles jolly to the last. (That name has long superseded Sampson Brass, by the bye. I call him so, from something skittle-playing and public-house in his countenance.) We have been up at five every morning, and on the road before seven. We were three carriages: a sort of wagon, with a cabriolet attached, for the luggage; a ramshackle villainous old swing upon wheels (hired at Geneva), for the children; and for ourselves, that travelling chariot which I was so kind as to bring here for sale. It was very cold indeed crossing the Jura—nothing but fog and frost; but when we were out of Switzerland and across the French frontier, it became warmer, and continued so. We

"stopped at between six and seven each evening;
"had two rather queer inns, wild French country
"inns; but the rest good. They were three hours
"and a half examining the luggage at the frontier
"custom-house—atop of a mountain, in a hard
"and biting frost; where Anne and Roche had
"sharp work I assure you, and the latter insisted
"on volunteering the most astonishing and un-
"necessary lies about my books, for the mere
"pleasure of deceiving the officials. When we
"were out of the mountain country, we came at
"a good pace, but were a day late in getting to
"our hotel here."

POST FOR
PARIS:
1846.

They were in Paris when that was written; At PARIS.
at the hotel Brighton; which they had reached
in the evening of Friday the 20th of November.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THREE MONTHS IN PARIS.

1846—1847.

PARIS:
1846.

First day.

Lord
Brougham.

No man enjoyed brief residence in a hotel more than Dickens, but "several tons of luggage, "other tons of servants, and other tons of children" are not desirable accompaniments to this kind of life; and his first day in Paris did not close before he had offered for an "eligible mansion." That same Saturday night he took a "colossal" walk about the city, of which the brilliancy and brightness almost frightened him; and among other things that attracted his notice was "rather a good book announced in a bookseller's window as *Les Mystères de Londres par Sir Trollope*. Do you know him?" A countryman better known had given him earlier greeting. "The first man who took hold of me in the "street, immediately outside this door, was Bruffum in his check trousers, and without the "proper number of buttons on his shirt, who was "going away this morning, he told me, but coming back in two months, when we would go "and dine—at some place known to him and fame."

PARIS:
1846.

Next day he took another long walk about the streets, and lost himself fifty times. This was Sunday, and he hardly knew what to say of it, as he saw it there and then. The bitter observance of that day he always sharply resisted, believing a little rational enjoyment to be not opposed to either rest or religion; but here was another matter. "The dirty churches, and the clattering carts and waggons, and the open shops (I don't think I passed fifty shut up, in all my strollings in and out), and the work-a-day dresses and drudgeries, are not comfortable. Open theatres and so forth I am well used to, of course, by this time; but so much toil and sweat on what one would like to see, apart from religious observances, a sensible holiday, is painful."

French Sunday.

The date of his letter was the 22nd of November, and it had three postscripts.* The first, "Monday afternoon," told me a house was taken;

* It had also the mention of another floating fancy for the weekly periodical which was still and always present to his mind, and which settled down at last, as the reader knows, into *Household Words*. "As to the Review, I strongly incline to the notion of a kind of *Spectator* (Addison's)—very cheap, and pretty frequent. We must have it thoroughly discussed. It would be a great thing to found something. If the mark between a sort of *Spectator*, and a different sort of *Athenaeum*, could be well hit, my belief is that a deal might be done. But it should be something with a marked and distinctive and obvious difference, in its design, from any other existing periodical."

Thoughts for periodical.

PARIS:
1846.

A house
taken.

that, unless the agreement should break off on any unforeseen fight between Roche and the agent ("a French Mrs. Gamp"), I was to address him at No. 48, Rue de Courcelles, Faubourg St. Honoré; and that he would merely then advert to the premises as in his belief the "most ridiculous, extraordinary, unparalleled, and preposterous" in the whole world; being something between a baby-house, a "shades," a haunted castle, and a mad kind of clock. "They belong to a Marquis Castellan, and you will be ready to die of laughing when you go over them." The second P.S. declared that his lips should be sealed till I beheld for myself. "By Heaven it is not to be imagined by the mind of man!" The third P.S. closed the letter. "One room is a tent. Another room is a grove. Another room is a scene at the Victoria. The upstairs rooms are like fanlights over street-doors. The nurseries—but no, no, no, no more! . . ."

His French
abode.

Its absurdity.

His following letter nevertheless sent more, even in the form of an additional protestation that never till I saw it should the place be described. "I will merely observe that it is fifty yards long, and eighteen feet high, and that the bedrooms are exactly like opera-boxes. It has its little courtyard and garden, and porter's house, and cordon to open the door, and so forth; and is a Paris mansion in little. There is a gleam of reason in the drawing-room. Being a gentleman's house, and not one furnished to let, it has some very curious things in it; some

PARIS:
1846.

“of the oddest things you ever beheld in your
 “life; and an infinity of easy chairs and sofas . . .
 “Bad weather. It is snowing hard. There is
 “not a door or window here—but that’s nothing!
 “there’s not a door or window in all Paris—that
 “shuts; not a chink in all the billions of trillions
 “of chinks in the city that can be stopped to
 “keep the wind out. And the cold!—but you
 “shall judge for yourself; and also of this pre-
 “posterous dining-room. The invention, sir, of
 “Henry Bulwer, who when he had executed it
 “(he used to live here), got frightened at what he
 “had done, as well he might, and went away . . .
 “The Brave called me aside on Saturday night,
 “and showed me an improvement he had effected
 “in the decorative way. ‘Which,’ he said, ‘will
 “‘very much s’prize Mis’r Fors’er when he come.’
 “You are to be deluded into the belief that
 “there is a perspective of chambers twenty miles
 “in length, opening from the drawing-room. . .”

A former
tenant.

My visit was not yet due, however, and what
 occupied or interested him in the interval may
 first be told. He had not been two days in Paris
 when a letter from his father made him very
 anxious for the health of his eldest sister. “I was
 “going to the play (a melodrama in eight acts,
 “five hours long), but hadn’t the heart to leave
 “home after my father’s letter,” he is writing on
 the 30th of November, “and sent Georgy and
 “Kate by themselves. There seems to be no
 “doubt whatever that Fanny is in a consump-
 “tion.” She had broken down in an attempt to

Sister Fanny's
illness.

PARIS:
1846.

Opinion of
Elliotson.

The English
Ambassador.

sing at a party in Manchester; and subsequent examination by Sir Charles Bell's son, who was present and took much interest in her, too sadly revealed the cause. "He advised that neither "she nor Burnett should be told the truth, and "my father has not disclosed it. In worldly circumstances they are very comfortable, and they "are very much respected. They seem to be happy "together, and Burnett has a great deal of teaching. You remember my fears about her when "she was in London the time of Alfred's marriage, and that I said she looked to me as if "she were in a decline? Kate took her to Elliotson, who said that her lungs were certainly "not affected then. And she cried for joy. "Don't you think it would be better for her to "be brought up, if possible, to see Elliotson "again? I am deeply, deeply grieved about it." This course was taken, and for a time there seemed room for hope; but the result will be seen. In the same letter I heard of poor Charles Sheridan, well known to us both, dying of the same terrible disease; and his chief, Lord Normanby, whose many acts of sympathy and kindness had inspired strong regard in Dickens, he had already found "as informal and good-natured "as ever, but not so gay as usual, and having an "anxious haggard way with him, as if his responsibilities were more than he had bargained "for." Nor, to account for this, had Dickens far to seek, when a little leisure enabled him to see something of what was passing in Paris in that

last year of Louis Philippe's reign. What first impressed him most unfavourably was a glimpse in the Champs Elysées, of the King himself coming in from the country. "There were two carriages. His was surrounded by horseguards. "It went at a great pace, and he sat very far "back in a corner of it, I promise you. It was "strange to an Englishman to see the Prefet of "Police riding on horseback some hundreds of "yards in advance of the cortége, turning his "head incessantly from side to side, like a figure "in a Dutch clock, and scrutinizing everybody "and everything, as if he suspected all the twigs "in all the trees in the long avenue."

PARIS:
1846.

The king of
the bar-
ricades.

But these and other political indications were only, as they generally prove to be, the outward signs of maladies more deeply-seated. He saw almost everywhere signs of canker eating into the heart of the people themselves. "It is a wicked "and detestable place, though wonderfully attractive; and there can be no better summary of "it, after all, than Hogarth's unmentionable "phrase." He sent me no letter that did not contribute something of observation or character. He went at first rather frequently to the Morgue, until shocked by something so repulsive that he had not courage for a long time to go back; and on that same occasion he had noticed the keeper smoking a short pipe at his little window, "and giving a bit of fresh turf to a linnet in a "cage." Of the condition generally of the streets he reported badly; the quays on the other side

Unhealthy
symptoms.

The Morgue.

PARIS:
1846.

Incident in
streets.

of the Seine were not safe after dark; and here was his own night experience of one of the best quarters of the city. "I took Georgy out, the night before last, to show her the Palais Royal lighted up; and on the Boulevard, a street as bright as the brightest part of the Strand or Regent-street, we saw a man fall upon another, close before us, and try to tear the cloak off his back. It was in a little dark corner near the Porte St. Denis, which stands out in the middle of the street. After a short struggle, the thief fled (there were thousands of people walking about), and was captured just on the other side of the road."

Parisian
population.

An incident of that kind might mean little or much: but what he proceeded to remark of the ordinary Parisian workpeople and smaller shopkeepers, had a more grave complexion; and may be thought perhaps still to yield some illustration, not without value, to the story of the quarter of a century that has passed since, and even to some of the appalling events of its latest year or two. "It is extraordinary what nonsense English people talk, write, and believe, about foreign countries. The Swiss (so much decried) will do anything for you, if you are frank and civil; they are attentive and punctual in all their dealings; and may be relied upon as steadily as the English. The Parisian workpeople and smaller shopkeepers are more like (and unlike) Americans than I could have supposed possible. To the American indifference and carelessness, they

Americans
and French.

PARIS:
1846.

"add a procrastination and want of the least heed about keeping a promise or being exact, which is certainly not surpassed in Naples. They have the American semi-sentimental independence too, and none of the American vigour or purpose. If they ever get free trade in France (as I suppose they will, one day), these parts of the population must, for years and years, be ruined. They couldn't get the means of existence, in competition with the English workmen. Their inferior manual dexterity, their lazy habits, perfect unreliability, and habitual insubordination, would ruin them in any such contest, instantly. They are fit for nothing but soldiering—and so far, I believe, the successors in the policy of your friend Napoleon have reason on their side. Eh bien, mon ami, quand vous venez à Paris, nous nous mettrons à quatre épingles, et nous verrons toutes les merveilles de la cité, et vous en jugerez. God bless me, I beg your pardon! It comes so natural."

The Napoleon
excuse.

On the 30th he wrote to me that he had got his papers into order and hoped to begin that day. But the same letter told me of the unsettlement thus early of his half-formed Paris plans. Three months sooner than he designed he should be due in London for family reasons; should have to keep within the limit of four months abroad; and as his own house would not be free till July, would have to hire one from the end of March. "In these circumstances I think I shall send Charley to King's-college after Christmas.

Unsettlement
of plans.

PARIS:
1846.

Eldest son's
education.

A true friend.

Christmas
tale on the
stage.

"I am sorry he should lose so much French, but "don't you think to break another half-year's "schooling would be a pity? Of my own will I "would not send him to King's-college at all, but "to Bruce-castle instead. I suppose, however, "Miss Coutts is best. We will talk over all this "when I come to London." The offer to take charge of his eldest son's education had been pressed upon Dickens by this true friend, to whose delicate and noble consideration for him it would hardly become me to make other allusion here. Munificent as the kindness was, however, it was yet only the smallest part of the obligation which Dickens felt that he owed this lady; to whose generous schemes for the neglected and uncared-for classes of the population, in all which he deeply sympathised, he did the very utmost to render, through many years, unstinted service of his time and his labour, with sacrifice unselfish as her own. His proposed early visit to London, named in this letter, was to see the rehearsal of his Christmas story, dramatised by Mr. Albert Smith for Mr. and Mrs. Keeley at the Lyceum; and my own proposed visit to Paris was to be in the middle of January. "It will then be "the height of the season, and a good time for "testing the unaccountable French vanity which "really does suppose there are no fogs here, but "that they are all in London."*

* Some smaller items of family news were in the same Family news. letter. "Mamey and Katey have come out in Parisian

 PARIS:
1846.

The opening of his next letter, which bore date the 6th of December, and its amusing sequel, will sufficiently speak for themselves. "Cold intense. The water in the bedroom-jugs freezes Hard frost. into solid masses from top to bottom, bursts the jugs with reports like small cannon, and rolls out on the tables and wash-stands, hard as granite. I stick to the shower-bath, but have been most hopelessly out of sorts—writing sorts; that's all. Couldn't begin, in the strange place; took a violent dislike to my study, and came down into the drawing-room; couldn't find a corner that would answer my purpose; fell into Out of (writing) sorts. a black contemplation of the waning month; sat six hours at a stretch, and wrote as many lines, &c. &c. &c. . . . Then, you know what arrangements are necessary with the chairs and tables; and then what correspondence had to be cleared off; and then how I tried to settle to my desk, and went about and about it, and dodged at it, like a bird at a lump of sugar. In short I have just begun; five printed pages

"dresses, and look very fine. They are not proud, and send their loves. Skittles is cutting teeth, and gets cross towards evening. Frankey is smaller than ever, and Walter very large. Charley in statu quo. Everything is enormously dear. Fuel, stupendously so. In airing the house, we burnt five pounds' worth of firewood in one week!! We mix it with coal now, as we used to do in Italy, and find the fires much warmer. To warm the house thoroughly, this singular habitation requires fires on the ground floor. We burn three . . ."

PARIS:
1846.

Alarming
neighbour.

"finished, I should say; and hope I shall be blessed
"with a better condition this next week, or I shall be
"behind-hand. I shall try to go at it—hard. I can't
"do more. . . . There is rather a good man lives
"in this street, and I have had a correspondence
"with him which is preserved for your inspection.
"His name is Barthélemy. He wears a prodigious
"Spanish cloak, a slouched hat, an immense
"beard, and long black hair. He called the other
"day, and left his card. Allow me to enclose his
"card, which has originality and merit.

Rue de Couicelles

49.

A fellow-
littérateur.

"Roche said I wasn't at home. Yesterday, he
"wrote me to say that he too was a 'Littérateur'
"—that he had called, in compliment to my dis-
tinguished reputation—"qu'il n'avait pas été reçu
"—qu'il n'était pas habitué à cette sorte de
"procédé—et qu'il pria Monsieur Dickens d'ou-
"blier son nom, sa mémoire, sa carte, et sa visite,
"et de considérer qu'elle n'avait pas été rendue!"

"Of course I wrote him a very polite reply immediately, telling him good-humouredly that he was quite mistaken, and that there were always two weeks in the beginning of every month when M. Dickens ne pouvait rendre visite à personne. He wrote back to say that he was more than satisfied; that it was his case too, at the end of every month; and that when busy himself, he not only can't receive or pay visits, but — 'tombe, généralement, aussi, dans des humeurs noires qui approchent de l'anthropophagie!!!' "I think that's pretty well."

LONDON
VISIT:
December,
1846.

Startling
blue-devils!

He was in London eight days, from the 15th to the 23rd of December;* and among the occupations of his visit, besides launching his little story on the stage, was the settlement of form for a cheap edition of his writings, which began in the following year. It was to be printed in double columns, and issued weekly in three-half-penny numbers; there were to be new prefaces, but no illustrations; and for each book something less than a fourth of the original price was to be charged. Its success was very good, but did not come even near to the mark of the later issues of his writings. His own feeling as to this, however, though any failure at the moment affected him on other grounds, was always that of a quiet confidence; and he had expressed this in a proposed dedication of this very edition, which for other reasons was ultimately laid aside. It will

Cheap edition
of works.

* "I shall bring the Brave, though I have no use for him. He'd die if I didn't."

PARIS:
1847.

Suppressed
dedication.

Return to
Paris.

Begging-
letter-writers.

be worth preserving here. "This cheap edition
"of my books is dedicated to the English people,
"in whose approval, if the books be true in
"spirit, they will live, and out of whose memory,
"if they be false, they will very soon die."

Upon his return to Paris I had frequent
report of his progress with his famous fifth num-
ber, on the completion of which I was to join him.
The day at one time seemed doubtful. "It would
"be miserable to have to work while you were here.
"Still, I make such sudden starts, and am so
"possessed of what I am going to do, that the
"fear may prove to be quite groundless, and if
"any alteration would trouble you, let the 13th
"stand at all hazards." The cold he described
as so intense, and the price of fuel so enormous,
that though the house was not half warmed ("as
"you'll say, when you feel it") it cost him very
near a pound a day. Begging-letter writers had
found out "Monsieur Dickens, le romancier
"célèbre," and waylaid him at the door and in
the street as numerous as in London: their
distinguishing peculiarity being that they were
nearly all of them "Chevaliers de la Garde
"Impériale de sa Majesté Napoléon le Grand,"
and that their letters bore immense seals with
coats of arms as large as five-shilling pieces.
His friends the Watsons passed new year's day
with him on their way to Rockingham from
Lausanne, leaving that country covered with snow
and the Bise blowing cruelly over it, but describ-
ing it as nothing to the cold of Paris. On the

day that closed the old year he had gone into the Morgue and seen an old man with grey head lying there. "It seemed the strangest thing in the world that it should have been necessary to take any trouble to stop such a feeble, spent, exhausted morsel of life. It was just dusk when I went in; the place was empty; and he lay there all alone, like an impersonation of the wintry eighteen hundred and forty-six. . . . I find I am getting inimitable, so I'll stop."

PARIS:
1847.
A tenant of
the Morgue.

The time for my visit having come, I had grateful proof of the minute and thoughtful provision characteristic of him in everything. My dinner had been ordered to the second at Boulogne, my place in the malle-poste taken, and these and other services announced in a letter, which, by way of doing its part also in the kindly work of preparation, broke out into French. He never spoke that language very well, his accent being somehow defective; but he practised himself into writing it with remarkable ease and fluency. "I have written to the Hôtel des Bains at Boulogne to send on to Calais and take your place in the malle-poste. . . . Of course you know that you'll be assailed with frightful shouts all along the two lines of ropes from all the touters in Boulogne, and of course you'll pass on like the princess who went up the mountain after the talking bird; but don't forget quietly to single out the Hôtel des Bains commissionnaire. The following circumstances will then occur. My experience is more recent than yours, and

My visit.

Imaginary
dialogue.

PARIS:
1847.

"I will throw them into a dramatic form. . . You
 "are filtered into the little office, where there are
 "some soldiers; and a gentleman with a black
 "beard and a pen and ink sitting behind a
 "counter. *Barbe Noire* (to the lord of L. I. F.).
 "Monsieur, votre passeport. *Monsieur*. Mon-
 "sieur, le voici! *Barbe Noire*. Où allez-vous,
 "monsieur? *Monsieur*. Monsieur, je vais à Paris.
 "*Barbe Noire*. Quand allez-vous partir, monsieur?
 "*Monsieur*. Monsieur, je vais partir aujourd'hui.
 "Avec la malle-poste. *Barbe Noire*. C'est bien.
 "(To Gendarme.) Laissez sortir monsieur! *Gen-*
 "*darme*. Par ici, monsieur, s'il vous plaît. Le
 "gendarme ouvert une très-petite porte. Mon-
 "sieur se trouve subitement entouré de tous les
 "gamins, agents, commissionnaires, porteurs, et
 "polissons, en général, de Boulogne, qui s'élancent
 "sur lui, en poussant des cris épouvantables.
 "Monsieur est, pour le moment, tout-à-fait effrayé,
 "et bouleversé. Mais monsieur reprend ses forces
 "et dit, de haute voix: 'Le Commissionnaire de
 "'l'Hôtel des Bains!' *Un petit homme* (s'avançant
 "rapidement, et en souriant doucement). Me
 "voici, monsieur. Monsieur Fors Tair, n'est-ce
 "pas? . . . Alors . . . Alors monsieur se promène
 "à l'Hôtel des Bains, où monsieur trouvera qu'un
 "petit salon particulier, en haut, est déjà préparé
 "pour sa réception, et que son dîner est déjà
 "commandé, aux soins du brave Courier, à *midi*
 "*et demi*. . . . Monsieur mangera son dîner près
 "du feu, avec beaucoup de plaisir, et il boirera
 "de vin rouge à la santé de Monsieur de Boze,

A Boulogne
reception.

French-
English.

"et sa famille intéressante et aimable. La malle-
 "poste arrivera au bureau de la poste aux lettres
 "à deux heures ou peut-être un peu plus tard.
 "Mais monsieur chargera le commissionnaire d'y
 "l'accompagner de bonne heure, car c'est beau-
 "coup mieux de l'attendre que de la perdre. La
 "malle-poste arrivé, monsieur s'assiéra, aussi con-
 "fortablement qu'il le peut, et il y restera jusqu'à
 "son arrivée au bureau de la poste aux lettres à
 "Paris. Parceque, le convoi (*train*) n'est pas
 "l'affaire de monsieur, qui continuera s'asseoir
 "dans la malle-poste, sur le chemin de fer, et
 "après le chemin de fer, jusqu'il se trouve à la
 "basse-cour du bureau de la poste aux lettres à
 "Paris, où il trouvera une voiture qui a été dé-
 "pêché de la Rue de Courcelles, quarante-huit.
 "Mais monsieur aura la bonté d'observer—Si le
 "convoi arriverait à Amiens après le départ du
 "convoi à minuit, il faudra y rester jusqu'à l'ar-
 "rivée d'un autre convoi à trois heures moins un
 "quart. En attendant, monsieur peut rester au
 "buffet (*refreshment room*), où l'on peut toujours
 "trouver un bon feu, et du café chaud, et des
 "très-bonnes choses à boire et à manger, pendant
 "toute la nuit.—Est-ce que monsieur comprend
 "parfaitement toutes ces règles pour sa guidance?
 "—Vive le Roi des Français! Roi de la nation la
 "plus grande, et la plus noble, et la plus extraordi-
 "nairement merveilleuse, du monde! A bas des
 "Anglais!

PARIS:
1847.French-
English.Cautions to a
traveller.Citizen
Dickens.

"CHARLES DICKENS,
 "Français naturalisé, et Citoyen de Paris."

PARIS:
1847.

We passed a fortnight together, and crowded into it more than might seem possible to such a narrow space. With a dreadful insatiability we passed through every variety of sight-seeing, prisons, palaces, theatres, hospitals, the Morgue and the Lazare, as well as the Louvre, Versailles, St. Cloud, and all the spots made memorable by the first revolution. The excellent comedian Regnier, known to us through Macready and endeared by many kindnesses, incomparable for his knowledge of the city and unwearied in friendly service, made us free of the green-room of the Français, where, on the birthday of Molière, we saw his "Don Juan" revived. At the Conservatoire we witnessed the masterly teaching of Samson; at the Odéon saw a new play by Ponsard, done but indifferently; at the Variétés "Gentil-Bernard," with four grisettes as if stepped out of a picture by Watteau; at the Gymnase "Clarisse Harlowe," with a death-scene of Rose Cheri which comes back to me, through the distance of time, as the prettiest piece of pure and gentle stage-pathos in my memory; at the Porte St. Martin "Lucretia Borgia" by Hugo; at the Cirque, scenes of the great revolution, and all the battles of Napoleon; at the Comic Opera, "Gibby"; and at the Palais Royal the usual new-year's piece, in which Alexandre Dumas was shown in his study beside a pile of quarto volumes five feet high, which proved to be the first tableau of the first act of the first piece to be played on the first night of his new theatre. That new theatre, the Historique,

Theatres.

Alexandre
Dumas.

we also saw verging to a very short-lived completeness; and we supped with Dumas himself, and Eugène Sue, and met Théophile Gautier and Alphonse Karr. We saw Lamartine also, and had much friendly intercourse with Scribe, and with the kind good-natured Amedée Pichot. One day we visited in the Rue du Bac the sick and ailing Chateaubriand, whom we thought like Basil Montagu; found ourselves at the other extreme of opinion in the sculpture-room of David d'Angers; and closed that day at the house of Victor Hugo, by whom Dickens was received with infinite courtesy and grace. The great writer then occupied a floor in a noble corner-house in the Place Royale, the old quarter of Ninon l'Enclos and the people of the Regency, of whom the gorgeous tapestries, the painted ceilings, the wonderful carvings and old golden furniture, including a canopy of state out of some palace of the middle age, quaintly and grandly reminded us. He was himself, however, the best thing we saw; and I find it difficult to associate the attitudes and aspect in which the world has lately wondered at him, with the sober grace and self-possessed quiet gravity of that night of twenty-five years ago. Just then Louis Philippe had ennobled him, but the man's nature was written noble. Rather under the middle size, of compact close-buttoned-up figure, with ample dark hair falling loosely over his close-shaven face, I never saw upon any features so keenly intellectual such a soft and sweet gentility, and certainly never

 PARIS:
1847.

 Visits to
famous
Frenchmen.

 Evening with
Victor Hugo.

PARIS:
1847.

heard the French language spoken with the picturesque distinctness given to it by Victor Hugo. He talked of his childhood in Spain, and of his father having been Governor of the Tagus in Napoleon's wars; spoke warmly of the English people and their literature; declared his preference for melody and simplicity over the music then fashionable at the Conservatoire; referred kindly to Ponsard, laughed at the actors who had murdered his tragedy at the Odéon, and sympathized with the dramatic venture of Dumas. To Dickens he addressed very charming flattery, in the best taste; and my friend long remembered the enjoyment of that evening.

There is little to add of our Paris holiday, if indeed too much has not been said already. We had an adventure with a drunken coachman, of which the sequel showed at least the vigour and decisiveness of the police in regard to hired vehicles* in those last days of the Orleans

Adventure
with a coach-
man.

* Dickens's first letter after my return described it to me. "Do you remember my writing a letter to the prefet of police "about that coachman? I heard no more about it until this "very day!" (12th of February), "when, at the moment of "your letter arriving, Roche put his head in at the door (I "was busy writing in the Baronial drawing-room) and said, "'Here is datter cocher!'—Sir, he had been in prison ever "since! and being released this morning, was sent by the "police to pay back the franc and a half, and to beg pardon, "and to get a certificate that he had done so, or he could "not go on the stand again! Isn't this admirable? But the "culminating point of the story (it could happen with no-

monarchy. At the Bibliothèque Royale we were much interested by seeing, among many other priceless treasures, Gutenberg's types, Racine's notes in his copy of Sophocles, Rousseau's music, and Voltaire's note upon Frederick of Prussia's letter. Nor should I omit that in what Dickens then told me, of even his small experience of the social aspects of Paris, there seemed but the same disease which raged afterwards through the second Empire. Not many days after I left, all Paris was crowding to the sale of a lady of the demi-monde, Marie du Plessis, who had led the most brilliant and abandoned of lives, and left behind her the most exquisite furniture and the

PARIS:
1847.

At the Biblio-
thèque
Royale.

Premonitory
symptoms.

"body but me) is that he WAS DRUNK WHEN HE CAME!!
 "Not very, but his eye was fixed, and he swayed in his
 "sabots, and smelt of wine, and told Roche incoherently that
 "he wouldn't have done it (committed the offence, that is) if
 "the people hadn't made him. He seemed to be troubled
 "with a phantasmagorial belief that all Paris had gathered
 "round us that night in the Rue St. Honoré, and urged him
 "on with frantic shouts. . . . Snow, frost, and cold. . . .
 "The Duke of Bordeaux is very well, and dines at the
 "Tuileries to-morrow. . . . *When* I have done, I will write
 "you a brilliant letter. . . . Loves from all. . . . Your
 "blue and golden bed looks desolate." The allusion to the
 Duc de Bordeaux was to remind me pleasantly of a slip of
 his own during our talk with Chateaubriand, when, at a
 loss to say something interesting to the old royalist, he be-
 thought him to enquire with sympathy when he had last seen
 the representative of the elder branch of Bourbons, as if he
 were resident in the city then and there!

PARIS:
1847.

Death of
Marie du
Plessis.

Napoleon
inheritance
ready.

most voluptuous and sumptuous bijouterie. Dickens wished at one time to have pointed the moral of this life and death of which there was great talk in Paris while we were together. The disease of satiety, which only less often than hunger passes for a broken heart, had killed her. "What do you want?" asked the most famous of the Paris physicians, at a loss for her exact complaint. At last she answered: "To see my mother." She was sent for; and there came a simple Breton peasant-woman clad in the quaint garb of her province, who prayed by her bed until she died. Wonderful was the admiration and sympathy; and it culminated when Eugène Sue bought her prayer-book at the sale. Our last talk before I quitted Paris, after dinner at the Embassy, was of the danger underlying all this, and of the signs also visible everywhere of the Napoleon-worship which the Orleanists themselves had most favoured. Accident brought Dickens to England a fortnight later, when again we met together, at Gorehouse, the self-contained reticent man whose doubtful inheritance was thus rapidly preparing to fall to him.*

At Gorehouse
21st February.

* This was on Sunday, the 21st of February, when a party were assembled of whom I think the French Emperor, his cousin the Prince Napoleon, Doctor Quin, Dickens's eldest son, and myself, are now the only survivors. Lady Blessington had received the day before from her brother Major Power, who held a military appointment in Hobart Town, a small oil-painting of a girl's face by the murderer Wainewright (mentioned on a former page as having been

The accident was the having underwritten his number of *Dombey* by two pages, which there was not time to supply otherwise than by coming to London to write them.* This was done accordingly; but another greater trouble followed. He had hardly returned to Paris when his eldest

PARIS:
1847.

seen by us together in Newgate), who was among the convicts there under sentence of transportation, and who had contrived somehow to put the expression of his own wickedness into the portrait of a nice kind-hearted girl. Major Power knew nothing of the man's previous history at this time, and had employed him on the painting out of a sort of charity. As soon as the truth went back, Wainewright was excluded from houses before open to him, and shortly after died very miserably. What Reynolds said of portrait painting, to explain its frequent want of refinement, that a man could only put into a face what he had in himself, was forcibly shown in this incident. The villain's story altogether moved Dickens to the same interest as it had excited in another profound student of humanity (Sir Edward Lytton), and, as will be seen, he also introduced him into one of his later writings.

The murderer
Wainewright.

* “. . . I am horrified to find that the first chapter makes “at least two pages less than I had supposed, and I have a “terrible apprehension that there will not be copy enough “for the number! As it could not possibly come out short, “and as there would be no greater possibility of sending to “me, in this short month, to supply what may be wanted, I “decide—after the first burst of nervousness is gone—to “follow this letter by Diligence to-morrow morning. The “malle poste is full for days and days. I shall hope to be “with you some time on Friday.” C. D. to J. F. Paris: Wednesday, 17th February, 1847.

A number
under-
written.

PARIS:
1847.

Illness of
eldest son.

Visit of his
father.

The "man
that put
together
Dombey."

Snuff-shop
readings.

son, whom I had brought to England with me and placed in the house of Doctor Major, then head-master of King's-college-school, was attacked by scarlet fever; and this closed prematurely Dickens's residence in Paris. But though he and his wife at once came over, and were followed after some days by the children and their aunt, the isolation of the little invalid could not so soon be broken through. His father at last saw him, nearly a month before the rest, in a lodging in Albany-street, where his grandmother, Mrs. Hogarth, had devoted herself to the charge of him; and an incident of the visit, which amused us all very much, will not unfitly introduce the subject that waits me in my next chapter.

An elderly charwoman employed about the place had shown so much sympathy in the family trouble, that Mrs. Hogarth specially told her of the approaching visit, and who it was that was coming to the sick-room. "Lawk ma'am!" she said. "Is the young gentleman upstairs the son "of the man that put together *Dombey*?" Reassured upon this point, she explained her question by declaring that she never thought there was a man that *could* have put together *Dombey*. Being pressed farther as to what her notion was of this mystery of a *Dombey* (for it was known she could not read), it turned out that she lodged at a snuff-shop kept by a person named Douglas, where there were several other lodgers; and that on the first Monday of every month there was a Tea, and the landlord read the month's number

of *Dombey*, those only of the lodgers who subscribed to the tea partaking of that luxury, but all having the benefit of the reading; and the impression produced on the old charwoman revealed itself in the remark with which she closed her account of it. "Lawk ma'am! I thought Old char-woman's compliment. "that three or four men must have put together *Dombey!*"

Dickens thought there was something of a compliment in this, and was not ungrateful.

CHAPTER XL.

DOMBEY AND SON.

1846—1848.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Drift of the
tale.

THOUGH his proposed new "book in shilling numbers" had been mentioned to me three months before he quitted England, he knew little himself at that time or when he left excepting the fact, then also named, that it was to do with *Pride* what its predecessor had done with *Selfishness*. But this limit he soon overpassed; and the succession of independent groups of character, surprising for the variety of their forms and handling, with which he enlarged and enriched his plan, went far beyond the range of the passion of *Mr. Dombey* and *Mr. Dombey's second wife*.

Why under-
valued.

Obvious causes have led to grave underestimates of this novel. Its first five numbers forced up interest and expectation so high that the rest of necessity fell short; but it is not therefore true of the general conception that thus the wine of it had been drawn, and only the lees left. In the treatment of acknowledged masterpieces in literature it not seldom occurs that the genius and the art of the master have not pulled together

to the close; but if a work of imagination is to forfeit its higher meed of praise because its pace at starting has not been uniformly kept, hard measure would have to be dealt to books of undeniable greatness. Among other critical severities it was said here, that Paul died at the beginning not for any need of the story, but only to interest its readers somewhat more; and that Mr. Dombey relented at the end for just the same reason. What is now to be told will show how little ground existed for either imputation. The so-called "violent change" in the hero has more lately been revived in the notices of Mr. Taine, who says of it that "*it spoils a fine novel;*" but it will be seen that in the apparent change no unnaturalness of change was involved, and certainly the adoption of it was not a sacrifice to "public morality." While every other portion of the tale had to submit to such varieties in development as the characters themselves entailed, the design affecting Paul and his father had been planned from the opening, and was carried without alteration to the close. And of the perfect honesty with which Dickens himself repelled such charges as those to which I have adverted, when he wrote the preface to his collected edition, remarkable proof appears in the letter to myself which accompanied the manuscript of his proposed first number. No other line of the tale had at this time been placed on paper.

When the first chapter only was done, and again when all was finished but eight slips, he

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Mistakes of
critics.

Adherence to
first design.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Page 274 of
Vol. III.

Letter with
MS. of first No.

Design as to
Paul and
sister.

had sent me letters formerly quoted. What follows came with the manuscript of the first four chapters on the 25th of July. "I will now go on "to give you an outline of my immediate intentions in reference to *Dombey*. I design to show "Mr. D. with that one idea of the Son taking "firmer and firmer possession of him, and swelling and bloating his pride to a prodigious extent. As the boy begins to grow up, I shall "show him quite impatient for his getting on, "and urging his masters to set him great tasks, "and the like. But the natural affection of the "boy will turn towards the despised sister; and I "purpose showing her learning all sorts of things, "of her own application and determination, to "assist him in his lessons: and helping him always. When the boy is about ten years old (in "the fourth number), he will be taken ill, and "will die; and when he is ill, and when he is "dying, I mean to make him turn always for refuge to the sister still, and keep the stern affection of the father at a distance. So Mr. Dombey "—for all his greatness, and for all his devotion "to the child—will find himself at arms' length "from him even then; and will see that his love "and confidence are all bestowed upon his sister, "whom Mr. Dombey has used—and so has the "boy himself too, for that matter—as a mere convenience and handle to him. The death of the "boy is a death-blow, of course, to all the father's "schemes and cherished hopes; and 'Dombey and "'Son,' as Miss Tox will say at the end of the

"number, 'is a Daughter after all.' . . From that time, I purpose changing his feeling of indifference and uneasiness towards his daughter into a positive hatred. For he will always remember how the boy had his arm round her neck when he was dying, and whispered to her, and would take things only from her hand, and never thought of him. . . At the same time I shall change *her* feeling towards *him* for one of a greater desire to love him, and to be loved by him; engendered in her compassion for his loss, and her love for the dead boy whom, in his way, he loved so well too. So I mean to carry the story on, through all the branches and offshoots and meanderings that come up; and through the decay and downfall of the house, and the bankruptcy of Dombey, and all the rest of it; when his only staff and treasure, and his unknown Good Genius always, will be this rejected daughter, who will come out better than any son at last, and whose love for him, when discovered and understood, will be his bitterest reproach. For the struggle with himself, which goes on in all such obstinate natures, will have ended then; and the sense of his injustice, which you may be sure has never quitted him, will have at last a gentler office than that of only making him more harshly unjust. . . I rely very much on Susan Nipper grown up, and acting partly as Florence's maid, and partly as a kind of companion to her, for a strong character throughout the book. I also rely on the Toodles,

LAUSANNE:
1846.

As to Dombey
and daughter.

Proposed
course of the
story.

Real character of hero.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

"The stock
"of the soup."

"and on Polly, who, like everybody else, will be found by Mr. Dombey to have gone over to his daughter and become attached to her. This is 'what cooks call 'the stock of the soup.' All 'kinds of things will be added to it, of course.' Admirable is the illustration thus afforded of his way of working, and very interesting the evidence it gives of the genuine feeling for his art with which this book was begun.

Walter Gay.

Question of
his fate.

The close of the letter put an important question affecting gravely a leading person in the tale. . . . "About the boy, who appears in the 'last chapter of the first number, I think it would 'be a good thing to disappoint all the expectations that chapter seems to raise of his happy 'connection with the story and the heroine, and 'to show him gradually and naturally trailing 'away, from that love of adventure and boyish 'light-heartedness, into negligence, idleness, dissipation, dishonesty, and ruin. To show, in 'short, that common, every-day, miserable declension of which we know so much in our ordinary 'life; to exhibit something of the philosophy of 'it, in great temptations and an easy nature; and 'to show how the good turns into bad, by degrees. If I kept some little notion of Florence 'always at the bottom of it, I think it might be 'made very powerful and very useful. What do 'you think? Do you think it may be done, 'without making people angry? I could bring 'out Solomon Gills and Captain Cuttle well, 'through such a history; and I descry, anyway,

"an opportunity for good scenes between Captain Cuttle and Miss Tox. This question of the boy is very important. . . Let me hear all you think about it. Hear! I wish I could." . . .

LAUSANNE:
1846.

For reasons that need not be dwelt upon here, but in which Dickens ultimately acquiesced, Walter was reserved for a happier future; and the idea thrown out took subsequent shape, amid circumstances better suited to its excellent capabilities, in the striking character of Richard Carstone in the tale of *Bleak House*. But another point had risen meanwhile for settlement not admitting of delay. In the first enjoyment of writing after his long rest, to which a former letter has referred, he had over-written his number by nearly a fifth; and upon his proposal to transfer the fourth chapter to his second number, replacing it by another of fewer pages, I had to object that this might damage his interest at starting. Thus he wrote on the 7th of August: ". . I have received your letter to-day with the greatest delight, and am overjoyed to find that you think so well of the number. I thought well of it myself, and that it was a great plunge into a story; but I did not know how far I might be stimulated by my paternal affection. . . What should you say, for a notion of the illustrations, to 'Miss Tox introduces the Party?' and 'Mr. Dombey and family?' meaning Polly Toodle, the baby, Mr. Dombey, and little Florence: whom I think it would be well to have. Walter, his uncle, and Captain Cuttle, might stand over.

Decided in
his favour.

Ante, p. 41.

Six pages too
much.

LAUSANNE:
1846.
Omissions
proposed.

Danger of
weakening
number.

New chapter
written.

"It is a great question with me, now, whether I
"had not better take this last chapter bodily out,
"and make it the last chapter of the second
"number; writing some other new one to close
"the first number. I think it would be impos-
"sible to take out six pages without great pangs.
"Do you think such a proceeding as I suggest
"would weaken number one very much? I wish
"you would tell me, as soon as you can after re-
"ceiving this, what your opinion is on the point.
"If you thought it would weaken the first num-
"ber, beyond the counterbalancing advantage of
"strengthening the second, I would cut down
"somehow or other, and let it go. I shall be
"anxious to hear your opinion. In the mean-
"while I will go on with the second, which I have
"just begun. I have not been quite myself since
"we returned from Chamounix, owing to the
"great heat." Two days later: "I have begun a
"little chapter to end the first number, and cer-
"tainly think it will be well to keep the ten pages
"of Wally and Co. entire for number two. But
"this is still subject to your opinion, which I am
"very anxious to know. I have not been in writ-
"ing cue all the week; but really the weather has
"rendered it next to impossible to work." Four
"days later: "I shall send you with this (on the
"chance of your being favourable to that view
"of the subject) a small chapter to close the first
"number, in lieu of the Solomon Gills one. I
"have been hideously idle all the week, and have
"done nothing but this trifling interloper; but

“hope to begin again on Monday—ding dong. . . LAUSANNE: 1846.
 “The inkstand is to be cleaned out to-night, and
 “refilled, preparatory to execution. I trust I may
 “shed a good deal of ink in the next fortnight.”
 Then, the day following, on arrival of my letter,
 he submitted to a hard necessity. “I received Chapter rejected.
 “yours to-day. A decided facer to me! I had
 “been counting, alas! with a miser’s greed, upon
 “the gained ten pages. . . . No matter. I have no
 “doubt you are right, and strength is everything.
 “The addition of two lines to each page, or
 “something less,—coupled with the enclosed cuts,
 “will bring it all to bear smoothly. In case more
 “cutting is wanted, I must ask you to try your
 “hand. I shall agree to whatever you propose.”
 These cuttings, absolutely necessary as they were, Sacrifices made.
 were not without much disadvantage; and in the
 course of them he had to sacrifice a passage
 foreshadowing his final intention as to Dombey.
 It would have shown, thus early, something of the
 struggle with itself that such pride must always go
 through; and I think it worth preserving in a note.*

* “He had already laid his hand upon the bell-rope to Passage of original MS. omitted.
 “convey his usual summons to Richards, when his eye fell
 “upon a writing-desk, belonging to his deceased wife, which
 “had been taken, among other things, from a cabinet in her
 “chamber. It was not the first time that his eye had lighted
 “on it. He carried the key in his pocket; and he brought
 “it to his table and opened it now—having previously locked
 “the room door—with a well accustomed hand.

“From beneath a heap of torn and cancelled scraps of
 “paper, he took one letter that remained entire. In-

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Anxiety as to
face of his
hero.

Suggested
type of city-
gentleman.

Several letters now expressed his anxiety and care about the illustrations. A nervous dread of caricature in the face of his merchant-hero, had led him to indicate by a living person the type of city-gentleman he would have had the artist select; and this is all he meant by his reiterated urgent request, "I do wish he could get a glimpse of A, for he is the very Dombey." But as the glimpse of A was not to be had, it was resolved to send for selection by himself glimpses of other letters of the alphabet, actual heads as well as fanciful ones; and the sheetful I sent out, which he returned when the choice was made, I here reproduce in facsimile.* In itself amusing, it has now the important use of showing, once for all, in regard to Dickens's intercourse with his artists,

- "voluntarily holding his breath as he opened this document, "and 'bating in the stealthy action something of his arrogant demeanour, he sat down, resting his head upon one hand, "and read it through.

"He read it slowly and attentively, and with a nice particularity to every syllable. Otherwise than as his great deliberation seemed unnatural, and perhaps the result of an effort equally great, he allowed no sign of emotion to escape him. When he had read it through, he folded and refolded it slowly several times, and tore it carefully into fragments. Checking his hand in the act of throwing these away, he put them in his pocket, as if unwilling to trust them even to the chances of being reunited and deciphered; "and instead of ringing, as usual, for little Paul, he sat solitary all the evening in his cheerless room." From the original MS. of *Dombey and Son*.

- The facsimile has not been given in this edition.

that they certainly had not an easy time with him; that, even beyond what is ordinary between author and illustrator, his requirements were exacting; that he was apt, as he has said himself, to build up temples in his mind not always makeable with hands; that in the results he had rarely anything but disappointment; and that of all notions to connect with him the most preposterous would be that which directly reversed these relations, and depicted him as receiving from any artist the inspiration he was always vainly striving to give. An assertion of this kind was contradicted in my first volume; but it has since been repeated so explicitly, that to prevent any possible misconstruction from a silence I would fain have persisted in, the distasteful subject is again reluctantly introduced.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Dickens and
his illus-
trators.

Pages 192-4 of
Vol. I.

It originated with a literary friend of the excellent artist by whom *Oliver Twist* was illustrated from month to month, during the earlier part of its monthly issue. This gentleman stated, in a paper written and published in America, that Mr. Cruikshank, by executing the plates before opportunity was afforded him of seeing the letter press, had suggested to the writer the finest effects in his story; and to this, opposing my clear recollection of all the time the tale was in progress, it became my duty to say that within my own personal knowledge the alleged fact was not true. "Dickens," the artist is reported as saying to his admirer, "ferreted out that bundle of drawings, "and when he came to the one which represents

Silly story
repeated.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Refutation
of it.

Why the
charge is
again noticed.

"Fagin in the cell, he silently studied it for half an hour, and told me he was tempted to change the whole plot of his story. . . I consented to let him write up to my designs; and that was the way in which Fagin, Sikes, and Nancy were created." Happily I was able to add the complete refutation of this folly by producing a letter of Dickens written at the time, which proved uncontestably that the closing illustrations, including the two specially named in support of the preposterous charge, Sikes and his Dog, and Fagin in his Cell, had not even been seen by Dickens until his finished book was on the eve of appearance. As however the distinguished artist, notwithstanding the refreshment of his memory by this letter, has permitted himself again to endorse the statement of his friend, I can only again print, on the same page which contains the strange language used by him, the words with which Dickens himself repels its imputation on his memory. To some it may be more satisfactory if I print the latter in fac-simile; and so leave for ever a charge in itself so incredible that nothing would have justified farther allusion to it but the knowledge of my friend's old and true regard for Mr. Cruikshank, of which evidence will shortly appear, and my own respect for an original genius well able to subsist of itself without taking what belongs to others.

Resuming the *Dombey* letters I find him on the 30th of August in better heart about his illustrator. "I shall gladly acquiesce in whatever

Dickens's
words at the
time: 1838.

My dear Guntersham.

I returned suddenly to town yesterday afternoon to look at the ~~cast~~^{cast} pages of Oliver Twist before it was delivered to the booksellers, when I saw the majority of the plates in the last volume for the first time.

With reference to the last one - Don Topham and Oliver. Without entering into the question of great haste or ~~and~~ any other cause which may have led to its being what it is - I am quite sure there can be little difference of opinion between us with respect to the result - my

Task you whether you will
 object to ^{desisting} delay, this plate apart
 and doing so at once in order that as
 few impressions as possible of the
 present one may go forth?

I ^{feel confident} ~~am quite certain~~ you know
 me too well to feel hurt by this
 enquiry, and with great confidence
 in you I have lost no time in
 preparing it.*

Mr. Cruik-
 shank's
 account
 thirty-four
 years after.

* "I will now explain that 'Oliver Twist,' the——, "the——, etc" (naming books by another writer), "were "produced in an entirely different manner from what would "be considered as the usual course; for *I, the Artist*, 'sug- "gested to the Authors of those works the original idea, or sub- "ject, for them to write out—furnishing, at the same time, "the principal characters and the scenes. And then as the "tale had to be produced in monthly parts, the *Writer*, or "Author, and the Artist, had every month to arrange and "settle what scenes, or subjects, and characters were to be in- "troduced, and the Author had to *weave in* such scenes as I "wished to represent."—*The Artist and the Author*, by George Cruikshank, p. 15. (Bell & Daldy: 1872.) The italics are Mr. Cruikshank's own.

"more changes or omissions you propose. Browne
"seems to be getting on well. . . He will have a
"good subject in Paul's christening. Mr. Chick
"is like D., if you'll mention that when you think
"of it. The little chapter of Miss Tox and the
"Major, which you alas! (but quite wisely) rejected
"from the first number, I have altered for the last
"of the second. I have not quite finished the
"middle chapter yet—having, I should say, three
"good days' work to do at it; but I hope it will
"be all a worthy successor to number one. I will
"send it as soon as finished." Then, a little
later: "Browne is certainly interesting himself,
"and taking pains. I think the cover very good:
"perhaps with a little too much in it, but that is
"an ungrateful objection." The second week of
September brought me the finished MS. of number
two; and his letter of the 3rd of October, noticing
objections taken to it, gives additional touches to
this picture of him while at work. The matter
that engages him is one of his masterpieces.
There is nothing in all his writings more perfect,
for what it shows of his best qualities, than the
life and death of Paul Dombey. The comedy is
admirable; nothing strained, everything hearty and
wholesome in the laughter and fun; all who con-
tribute to the mirth, Doctor Blimber and his pupils,
Mr. Toots, the Chicks and the Toodles, Miss Tox
and the Major, Paul and Mrs. Pipchin, up to his
highest mark; and the serious scenes never falling
short of it, from the death of Paul's mother in the
first number, to that of Paul himself in the fifth,

LAUSANNE:
1846.Hints for
artist.

Alterations.

Second
number done.A master-
piece of his
writing.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Picture of him
at work.

An expe-
rience of Ben
Jonson's.

How ob-
jections are
taken.

which, as a writer of genius with hardly exaggeration said, threw a whole nation into mourning. But see how eagerly this fine writer takes every suggestion, how little of self-esteem and self-sufficiency there is, with what a consciousness of the tendency of his humour to exuberance he surrenders what is needful to restrain it, and of what small account to him is any special piece of work in his care and his considerateness for the general design. I think of Ben Jonson's experience of the greatest of all writers. "He was indeed honest, "and of an open and free nature; had an excellent "phantasy, brave notions and gentle expressions; "wherein he flowed with that facility, that some- "times it was necessary he should be stopped." Who it was that stopped *him*, and the ease of doing it, no one will doubt. Whether he, as well as the writer of later time, might not with more advantage have been left alone, will be the only question.

Thus ran the letter of the 3rd of October: "Miss Tox's colony I will smash. Walter's allusion "to Carker (would you take it *all* out?) shall be "dele'd. Of course, you understand the man? I "turned that speech over in my mind; but I "thought it natural that a boy should run on, "with such a subject, under the circumstances: "having the matter so presented to him. . . I "thought of the possibility of malice on christen- "ing points of faith, and put the drag on as I "wrote. Where would you make the insertion, "and to what effect? *That* shall be done too.

"I want you to think the number sufficiently good
 "stoutly to back up the first. It occurs to me—
 "might not your doubt about the christening be
 "a reason for not making the ceremony the subject
 "of an illustration? Just turn this over. Again:
 "if I could do it (I shall have leisure to consider
 "the possibility before I begin), do you think it
 "would be advisable to make number three a
 "kind of half-way house between Paul's infancy,
 "and his being eight or nine years old?—In that
 "case I should probably not kill him until the
 "fifth number. Do you think the people so likely
 "to be pleased with Florence, and Walter, as to
 "relish another number of them at their present
 "age? Otherwise, Walter will be two or three
 "and twenty, straightway. I wish you would
 "think of this. . . I am sure you are right about
 "the christening. It shall be artfully and easily
 "amended. . . Eh?"

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Should little
Paul's life be
prolonged?

Meanwhile, two days before this letter, his first number had been launched with a sale that transcended his hopes, and brought back *Nickleby* days. The *Dombey* success "is BRILLIANT!" he wrote to me on the 11th. "I had put before
 "me thirty thousand as the limit of the most ex-
 "treme success, saying that if we should reach
 "that, I should be more than satisfied and more
 "than happy; you will judge how happy I am!
 "I read the second number here last night to the
 "most prodigious and uproarious delight of the
 "circle. I never saw or heard people laugh so.
 "You will allow me to observe that my reading

Sale of the
first No.

A reading
of the
second No.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Beginning
third No.

A number to
be added to
Paul's life.

"of the Major has merit." What a valley of the shadow he had just been passing, in his journey through his Christmas book, has before been told; but always, and with only too much eagerness, he sprang up under pressure. "A week of perfect "idleness," he wrote to me on the 26th, "has "brought me round again—idleness so rusting and "devouring, so complete and unbroken, that I am "quite glad to write the heading of the first chapter "of number three to-day. I shall be slow at first, "I fear, in consequence of that change of the "plan. But I allow myself nearly three weeks for "the number; designing, at present, to start for "Paris on the 16th of November. Full particulars "in future bills. Just going to bed. I think I "can make a good effect, on the after story, of "the feeling created by the additional number "before Paul's death." . . Five more days confirmed him in this hope. "I am at work at "*Dombey* with good speed, thank God. All well "here. Country stupendously beautiful. Mountains "covered with snow. Rich, crisp weather." There was one drawback. The second number had gone out to him, and the illustrations he found to be so "dreadfully bad" that they made him "curl "his legs up." They made him also more than usually anxious in regard to a special illustration on which he set much store, for the part he had in hand.

The first chapter of it was sent me only four days later (nearly half the entire part, so freely his fancy was now flowing and overflowing), with intimation for the artist: "The best subject for

"Browne will be at Mrs. Pipchin's; and if he
 "liked to do a quiet odd thing, Paul, Mrs. Pipchin,
 "and the Cat, by the fire, would be very good
 "for the story. I earnestly hope he will think it
 "worth a little extra care. The second subject,
 "in case he shouldn't take a second from that
 "same chapter, I will shortly describe as soon as
 "I have it clearly (to-morrow or next day), and
 "send it to *you* by post." The result was not
 satisfactory; but as the artist more than redeemed
 it in the later course of the tale, and the present
 disappointment was mainly the incentive to that
 better success, the mention of the failure here
 will be excused for what it illustrates of Dickens
 himself. "I am really *distressed* by the illustration
 "of Mrs. Pipchin and Paul. It is so frightfully
 "and wildly wide of the mark. Good Heaven!
 "in the commonest and most literal construction
 "of the text, it is all wrong. She is described as
 "an old lady, and Paul's 'miniature arm-chair' is
 "mentioned more than once. He ought to be
 "sitting in a little arm-chair down in the corner
 "of the fireplace, staring up at her. I can't say
 "what pain and vexation it is to be so utterly
 "misrepresented. I would cheerfully have given
 "a hundred pounds to have kept this illustration
 "out of the book. He never could have got that
 "idea of Mrs. Pipchin if he had attended to the
 "text. Indeed I think he does better without
 "the text; for then the notion is made easy to
 "him in short description, and he can't help tak-
 "ing it in."

LAUSANNE:
1846.

Scene at Mrs.
Pipchin's.

Failure of an
illustration.

What it
should have
been.

LAUSANNE:
1846.

The Mrs.
Pipchin of his
childhood.

He felt the disappointment more keenly, because the conception of the grim old boarding-house keeper had taken back his thoughts to the miseries of his own child-life, and made her, as her prototype in verity was, a part of the terrible reality.* I had forgotten, until I again read this letter of the 4th of November 1846, that he thus early proposed to tell me that story of his boyish sufferings which a question from myself, of some months later date, so fully elicited. He was now hastening on with the close of his third number, to be ready for departure to Paris.

Finishing
third No.

"... I hope to finish the number by next "Tuesday or Wednesday. It is hard writing under "these bird-of-passage circumstances, but I have "no reason to complain, God knows, having "come to no knot yet. . . . I hope you will like "Mrs. Pipchin's establishment. It is from the "life, and I was there—I don't suppose I was "eight years old; but I remember it all as well, "and certainly understood it as well, as I do "now. We should be devilish sharp in what we "do to children. I thought of that passage in "my small life, at Geneva. *Shall I leave you my "life in MS. when I die? There are some things*

First thought
of his auto-
biography.

* I take, from his paper of notes for the number, the various names, beginning with that of her real prototype, out of which the name selected came to him at last. "Mrs. "Roylance . . . House at the sea-side. Mrs. Wrychin. Mrs. "Tipchin. Mrs. Alchin. Mrs. Somching. Mrs. Pipchin." See Vol. I. p. 65.

*"in it that would touch you very much, and that
"might go on the same shelf with the first volume
"of Holcroft's."*

PARIS:
1846.

On the Monday week after that was written he left Lausanne for Paris, and my first letter to him there was to say that he had overwritten his number by three pages. "I have taken out about
"two pages and a half," he wrote by return from the hotel Brighton, "and the rest I must ask you
"to take out with the assurance that you will
"satisfy me in whatever you do. The sale, prodigious indeed! I am very thankful." Next day he wrote as to Walter. "I see it will be best as
"you advise, to give that idea up; and indeed I
"don't feel it would be reasonable to carry it out
"now. I am far from sure it could be wholesomely done, after the interest he has acquired.
"But when I have disposed of Paul (poor boy!)
"I will consider the subject farther." The subject was never resumed. He was at the opening of his admirable fourth part, when, on the 6th of December, he wrote from the Rue de Courcelles:
"Here am I, writing letters, and delivering
"opinions, politico-economical and otherwise, as
"if there were no undone number, and no undone Dick! Well. Così va il mondo (God
"bless me! Italian! I beg your pardon)—and
"one must keep one's spirits up, if possible, even
"under *Dombey* pressure. Paul, I shall slaughter
"at the end of number five. His school ought to
"be pretty good, but I haven't been able to dash
"at it freely, yet. However, I have avoided un-

Two pages "
and a half too
much.

Opening
fourth No.

At Doctor
Blimber's.

PARIS:
1846.

"necessary dialogue so far, to avoid overwriting;
"and all I *have* written is point."

Paul's
school-life.

And so, in "point," it went to the close; the rich humour of its picture of Doctor Blimber and his pupils, alternating with the quaint pathos of its picture of little Paul; the first a good-natured exposure of the forcing-system and its fruits, as useful as the sterner revelation in *Nickleby* of the atrocities of Mr. Squeers, and the last even less attractive for the sweetness and sadness of its foreshadowing of a child's death, than for those strange images of a vague, deep thoughtfulness, of a shrewd unconscious intellect, of mysterious small philosophies and questionings, by which the young old-fashioned little creature has a glamour thrown over him as he is passing away. It was wonderfully original, this treatment of the part that thus preceded the close of Paul's little life; and of which the first conception, as I have shown, was an afterthought. It quite took the death itself out of the region of pathetic commonplaces, and gave to it the proper relation to the sorrow of the little sister that survives it. It is a fairy vision to a piece of actual suffering; a sorrow with heaven's hues upon it, to a sorrow with all the bitterness of earth.

Paul and
Florence.

Page 93 of
Vol. III.

The number had been finished, he had made his visit to London, and was again in the Rue de Courcelles, when on Christmas day he sent me its hearty old wishes, and a letter of Jeffrey's on his new story of which the first and second

part had reached him. "Many merry Christmases, "many happy new years, unbroken friendship, "great accumulation of cheerful recollections, affection on earth, and Heaven at last! . . . Is it "not a strange example of the hazard of writing "in parts, that a man like Jeffrey should form his "notion of Dombey and Miss Tox on three "months' knowledge? I have asked him the "same question, and advised him to keep his "eye on both of them as time rolls on.* I do

PARIS:
1846.

Lord Jeffrey
criticizes
Nos. 1 & 2.

* Some passages may be subjoined from the letter, as it does not appear among those printed by Lord Cockburn. "EDINBURGH, 14th December, '46. My dear, dear "Dickens!—and dearer every day, as you every day give me "more pleasure and do me more good! You do not wonder "at this style? for you know that I have been *in love with* "you, ever since Nelly! and I do not care now who knows "it. . . . The Dombey's, my dear D! how can I thank you "enough for them! The truth, and the delicacy, and the "softness and depth of the pathos in that opening death-scene, could only come from one hand; and the exquisite "taste which spares all details, and breaks off just when the "effect is at its height, is wholly yours. But it is Florence "on whom my hopes chiefly repose; and in her I see the "promise of another Nelly! though reserved, I hope, for a "happier fate, and destined to let us see what a *grown-up* "female angel is like. I expect great things, too, from "Walter, who begins charmingly, and will be still better I "fancy than young Nickleby, to whom as yet he bears most "resemblance. I have good hopes too of Susan Nipper, "who I think has great capabilities, and whom I trust you "do not mean to drop. Dombey is rather too hateful, and "strikes me as a mitigated Jonas, without his brutal coarse-

Jeffrey's
forecast of
the tale.

PARIS:
1846.

Jeffrey on
Crabbe.

Beginning
fifth No.

What he will
do with it.

Jeffrey's
anticipations.

"not at heart, however, lay much real stress on his opinion, though one is naturally proud of awakening such sincere interest in the breast of an old man who has so long worn the blue and yellow . . . He certainly did some service in his old criticisms, especially to Crabbe. And though I don't think so highly of Crabbe as I once did (feeling a dreary want of fancy in his poems), I think he deserved the pains-taking and conscientious tracking with which Jeffrey followed him" . . . Six days later he described himself sitting down to the performance of one of his greatest achievements, his number five, "most abominably dull and stupid. I have only written a slip, but I hope to get to work in strong earnest to-morrow. It occurred to me on special reflection, that the first chapter should be with Paul and Florence, and that it should leave a pleasant impression of the little fellow being happy, before the reader is called upon to see him die. I mean to have a genteel breaking-up at Doctor Blimber's therefore, for the Midsummer vacation; and to show him in

"ness and ruffian ferocity. I am quite in the dark as to what you mean to make of Paul, but shall watch his development with interest. About Miss Tox, and her Major, and the Chicks, perhaps I do not care enough. But you know I always grudge the exquisite painting you waste on such portraits. I love the Captain, tho', and his hook, as much as you can wish; and look forward to the future appearances of Carker Junior, with expectations which I know will not be disappointed. . . ."

"a little quiet light (now dawning through the 'chinks of my mind), which I hope will create 'an agreeable impression." Then, two days later: ". . . I am working very slowly. You will 'see in the first two or three lines of the enclosed 'first subject, with what idea I am ploughing 'along. It is difficult; but a new way of doing 'it, it strikes me, and likely to be pretty."

PARIS:
1847.

And then, after three days more, came something of a damper to his spirits, as he thus toiled along. He saw public allusion made to a review that had appeared in the *Times* of his Christmas book, and it momentarily touched what he too truly called his morbid susceptibility to exasperation. "I see that the 'good old Times' are again 'at issue with the inimitable B. Another touch 'of a blunt razor on B.'s nervous system.—Friday 'morning. Inimitable very mouldy and dull. 'Hardly able to work. Dreamed of *Timeses* all 'night. Disposed to go to New Zealand and 'start a magazine." But soon he sprang up, as usual, more erect for the moment's pressure; and after not many days I heard that the number was as 'good as done. His letter was very brief, and told me that he had worked so hard the day before (Tuesday, the 12th of January), and so incessantly, night as well as morning, that he had breakfasted and lain in bed till midday. "I 'hope I have been very successful." There was but one small 'chapter more to write, in which he and his little friend were to part company for

A damper
to the spirit.

A fancy for
New Zealand.

Close of
Paul's life.

PARIS:
1847.

ever; and the greater part of the night of the day on which it was written, Thursday the 14th, he was wandering desolate and sad about the streets of Paris. I arrived there the following morning on my visit; and as I alighted from the malle-poste, a little before eight o'clock, found him waiting for me at the gate of the post-office bureau.

Beginning
sixth No.

Its diffi-
culties.

I left him on the 2nd of February with his writing-table in readiness for number six; but on the 4th, enclosing me subjects for illustration, he told me he was "not under weigh yet. Can't "begin." Then, on the 7th, his birthday, he wrote to warn me he should be late. "Could "not begin before Thursday last, and find it very "difficult indeed to fall into the new vein of the "story. I see no hope of finishing before the "16th at the earliest, in which case the steam "will have to be put on for this short month. "But it can't be helped. Perhaps I shall get a "rush of inspiration. . . . I will send the chapters "as I write them, and you must not wait, of "course, for me to read the end in type. To "transfer to Florence, instantly, all the previous "interest, is what I am aiming at. For that, all "sorts of other points must be thrown aside in "this number. . . . We are going to dine again "at the Embassy to-day—with a very ill will on "my part. All well. I hope when I write next "I shall report myself in better cue. . . . I have "had a tremendous outpouring from Jeffrey about "the last part, which he thinks the best thing

"past, present, or to come."* Three more days and I had the MS. of the completed chapter, nearly half the number (in which as printed it stands second, the small middle chapter having been transposed to its place). "I have taken the "most prodigious pains with it; the difficulty, immediately after Paul's death, being very great. "May you like it! My head aches over it now "(I write at one o'clock in the morning), and I "am strange to it. . . I think I shall manage "Dombey's second wife (introduced by the Major), "and the beginning of that business in his pre-sent state of mind, very naturally and well . . . "Paul's death has amazed Paris. All sorts of

PARIS:
1847.

Thoughts for
Edith.

* "EDINBURGH, 31st January, 1847. Oh, my dear, Jeffrey on "dear Dickens! what a No. 5 you have now given us! I Paul's death. "have so cried and sobbed over it last night, and again this "morning; and felt my heart purified by those tears, and "blessed and loved you for making me shed them; and I "never can bless and love you enough. Since the divine "Nelly was found dead on her humble couch, beneath the "snow and the ivy, there has been nothing like the actual "dying of that sweet Paul, in the summer sunshine of that "lofty room. And the long vista that leads us so gently "and sadly, and yet so gracefully and winningly, to the "plain consummation! Every trait so true, and so touch-ing—and yet lightened by the fearless innocence which "goes *playfully* to the brink of the grave, and that pure "affection which bears the unstained spirit, on its soft and "lambent flash, at once to its source in eternity." In the same letter he told him of his having been reading the *Battle of Life* again, charmed with its sweet writing and generous sentiments.

PARIS:
1847.

"people are open-mouthed with admiration . . .
 "When I have done, I'll write you *such* a letter!
 "Don't cut me short in your letters just now, be-
 "cause I'm working hard. . . I'll make up. . .
 "Snow—snow—snow—a foot thick." The day
 after this, came the brief chapter which was
 printed as the first; and then, on the 16th, which
 he had fixed as his limit for completion, the
 close reached me; but I had meanwhile sent him
 out so much of the proof as convinced him that
 he had underwritten his number by at least two
 pages, and determined him to come to London.
 The incident has been told which soon after
 closed his residence abroad, and what remained
 of his story was written in England.

Two pages
too little.

LONDON:

I shall not farther dwell upon it in any detail.
 It extended over the whole of the year; and the
 interest and passion of it, when to himself both
 became centred in Florence and in Edith Dombey,
 took stronger hold of him, and more powerfully
 affected him, than had been the case in any of
 his previous writings, I think, excepting only the
 close of the *Old Curiosity Shop*. Jeffrey compared
 Florence to Little Nell, but the differences from
 the outset are very marked, and it is rather in
 what disunites or separates them that we seem to
 find the purpose aimed at. If the one, amid
 much strange and grotesque violence surrounding
 her, expresses the innocent unconsciousness of
 childhood to such rough ways of the world,
 passing unscathed as Una to her home beyond
 it, the other is this character in action and re-

Florence and
Little Nell.

 LONDON:
1847.

sistance, a brave young resolute heart that will *not* be crushed, and neither sinks nor yields, but from earth's roughest trials works out her own redemption even here. Of Edith from the first Jeffrey judged more rightly; and, when the story was nearly half done, expressed his opinion about her, and about the book itself, in language that pleased Dickens for the special reason that at the time this part of the book had seemed to many to have fallen greatly short of the splendour of its opening. Jeffrey said however quite truly, claiming to be heard with authority as his "Critic-laureate," that of all his writings it was perhaps the most finished in diction, and that it equalled the best in the delicacy and fineness of its touches, "while it rises to higher and deeper passions, not "resting, like most of the former, in sweet thought-fulness, and thrilling and attractive tenderness, "but boldly wielding all the lofty and terrible "elements of tragedy, and bringing before us the "appalling struggles of a proud, scornful, and "repentant spirit." Not that she was exactly this. Edith's worst qualities are but the perversion of what should have been her best. A false education in her, and a tyrant passion in her husband, make them other than Nature meant; and both show how life may run its evil course against the higher dispensations.

 Jeffrey's
judgments.

 On the Edith
scenes.

As the catastrophe came in view, a nice point in the management of her character and destiny arose. I quote from a letter of the 19th of November, when he was busy with his fourteenth

 Edith's first
destiny.

LONDON:
1847.

Doubts
suggested.

Disbeliefs of
Jeffrey.

Important
change.

part. "Of course she hates Carker in the most
"deadly degree. I have not elaborated that, now,
"because (as I was explaining to Browne the other
"day) I have relied on it very much for the effect
"of her death. But I have no question that what
"you suggest will be an improvement. The
"strongest place to put it in, would be the close
"of the chapter immediately before this last one.
"I want to make the two first chapters as light
"as I can, but I will try to do it, solemnly, in
"that place." Then came the effect of this four-
teenth number on Jeffrey; raising the question of
whether the end might not come by other means
than her death, and bringing with it a more
bitter humiliation for her destroyer. While en-
gaged on the fifteenth (21st December) Dickens
thus wrote to me: "I am thoroughly delighted
"that you like what I sent. I enclose designs.
"Shadow-plate, poor. But I think Mr. Dombey
"admirable. One of the prettiest things in the
"book ought to be at the end of the chapter I
"am writing now. But in Florence's marriage,
"and in her subsequent return to her father, I see
"a brilliant opportunity... Note from Jeffrey this
"morning, who won't believe (positively refuses)
"that Edith is Carker's mistress. What do you
"think of a kind of inverted Maid's Tragedy,
"and a tremendous scene of her undeceiving
"Carker, and giving him to know that she never
"meant that?" So it was done; and when he sent
me the chapter in which Edith says adieu to
Florence, I had nothing but praise and pleasure

to express. "I need not say," he wrote in reply, "I can't, how delighted and overjoyed I am by what you say and feel of it. I propose to show *Dombey* *twice* more; and in the end, leave him exactly as you describe." The end came; and, at the last moment when correction was possible, this note arrived. "I suddenly remember that I have forgotten Diogenes. Will you put him in the last little chapter? After the word 'favourite' in reference to Miss Tox, you can add, 'except with Diogenes, who is growing old and wilful.' Or, on the last page of all, after 'and with them two children: boy and girl' (I quote from memory), you might say 'and an old dog is generally in their company,' or to that effect. Just what you think best."

LONDON:
1847-48.

Diogenes
remembered.

That was on Saturday the 25th of March, 1848, and may be my last reference to *Dombey* until the book, in its place with the rest, finds critical allusion when I close. But as the confidences revealed in this chapter have dealt wholly with the leading currents of interest, there is yet room for a word on incidental persons in the story, of whom I have seen other so-called confidences alleged which it will be only right to state have really no authority. And first let me say what unquestionable evidence these characters give of the unimpaired freshness, richness, variety, and fitness of Dickens's invention at this time. Glorious Captain Cuttle, laying his head to the wind and fighting through everything; his friend Jack

Other
characters.

LONDON:
1848.

Jack Bunsby.

Dombey
household.

Blimber
establish-
ment.

Bunsby,* with a head too ponderous to lay-to, and so falling victim to the inveterate MacStinger; good-hearted, modest, considerate Toots, whose brains rapidly go as his whiskers come, but who yet gets back from contact with the world, in his shambling way, some fragments of the sense pumped out of him by the forcing Blimbers; breathless Susan Nipper, beaming Polly Toodle, the plaintive Wickham, and the awful Pipchin, each with her duty in the starched Dombey household so nicely appointed as to seem born for only that; simple thoughtful old Gills and his hearty young lad of a nephew; Mr. Toodle and his children, with the charitable grinder's decline and fall; Miss Tox, obsequious flatterer from nothing but good-nature; spectacled and analytic, but not unkind Miss Blimber; and the good droning dull benevolent Doctor himself, withering even the fruits of his well-spread dinner-table with his *It is remarkable, Mr. Feeder, that the Romans*—"at the mention of which terrible people, their implacable enemies, every young gentleman fastened his gaze upon the Doctor, with an assumption of the deepest interest." So vivid and life-like were all these people, to the very youngest of the young gentlemen, that it became natural eagerly to seek out for them actual prototypes;

* "*Isn't Bunsby good?*" I heard Lord Denman call out, with unmistakable glee and enjoyment, over Talfourd's table—I think to Sir Edward Ryan; one of the few survivors of that pleasant dinner party of May 1847.

but I think I can say with some confidence of them all, that, whatever single traits may have been taken from persons known to him (a practice with all writers, and very specially with Dickens), only two had living originals. His own experience of Mrs. Pipchin has been related; I had myself some knowledge of Miss Blimber; and the Little Wooden Midshipman did actually (perhaps does still) occupy his post of observation in Leadenhall-street. The names that have been connected, I doubt not in perfect good faith, with Sol Gills, Perch the messenger, and Captain Cuttle, have certainly not more foundation than the fancy a courteous correspondent favours me with, that the redoubtable Captain must have sat for his portrait to Charles Lamb's blustering, loud-talking, hook-handed Mr. Mingay. As to the amiable and excellent city-merchant whose name has been given to Mr. Dombey, he might with the same amount of justice or probability be supposed to have originated *Coriolanus* or *Timon of Athens*.

LONDON:
1848.Supposed
originals.Mistaken
surmises.Page 112 of
Vol. III.

CHAPTER XLI.

SPLENDID STROLLING.

1847—1852.

LONDON:
1847.Birth of fifth
son.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE remaining still in possession of Sir James Duke, a house was taken in Chester-place, Regent's-park, where, on the 18th of April, his fifth son, to whom he gave the name of Sydney Smith Haldimand, was born.* Exactly

Death of
Lieut. Sydney
Dickens.

* He entered the Royal Navy, and survived his father only a year and eleven months. He was a Lieutenant, at the time of his death from a sharp attack of bronchitis; being then on board the P. and O. steamer "Malta," invalided from his ship the *Topaze*, and on his way home. He was buried at sea on the 2nd of May, 1872. Poor fellow! He was the smallest in size of all the children, in his manhood reaching only to a little over five feet; and throughout his childhood was never called by any other name than the "Ocean Spectre," from a strange little weird yet most attractive look in his large wondering eyes, very happily caught in a sketch in oils by the good Frank Stone, done at Bonchurch in September 1849 and remaining in his aunt's possession. "Stone has painted," Dickens then wrote to me, "the Ocean Spectre, and made a very pretty little picture of "him." It was a strange chance that led his father to invent

a month before, we had attended together the funeral, at Highgate, of his publisher Mr. William Hall, his old regard for whom had survived the recent temporary cloud, and with whom he had the association as well of his first success, as of much kindly intercourse not forgotten at this sad time. Of the summer months that followed, the greater part was passed by him at Brighton or Broadstairs; and the chief employment of his leisure, in the intervals of *Dombey*, was the management of an enterprise originating in the success of our private play, of which the design was to benefit a great man of letters.

LONDON:
1847.

The purpose and the name had hardly been announced, when, with the statesmanlike attention to literature and its followers for which Lord John Russell has been eccentric among English politicians, a civil-list pension of two hundred a year was granted to Leigh Hunt; but though this modified our plan so far as to strike out of it performances meant to be given in London, so much was still thought necessary as might clear off past liabilities, and enable one of the most genuine of writers better to enjoy the easier future that had at last been opened to him. Reserving therefore anything realized beyond a certain sum for a dramatic author of merit, Mr. John Poole, to whom help had become also important, it was proposed to give, on Leigh Hunt's behalf, two

Theatrical
benefit for
Leigh Hunt.

Proposed per-
formances.

this playful name for one whom the ocean did indeed take to itself at last.

LONDON:
1847.

Leading
actors.

representations of Ben Jonson's comedy, one at Manchester and the other at Liverpool, to be varied by different farces in each place; and with a prologue of Talfourd's which Dickens was to deliver in Manchester, while a similar address by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton was to be spoken by me in Liverpool. Among the artists and writers associated in the scheme were Mr. Frank Stone, Mr. Augustus Egg, Mr. John Leech, and Mr. George Cruikshank; Mr. Douglas Jerrold, Mr. Mark Lemon, Mr. Dudley Costello, and Mr. George Henry Lewes; the general management and supreme control being given to Dickens.

The manager.

Leading men in both cities contributed largely to the design, and my friend Mr. Alexander Ireland of Manchester has lately sent me some letters not more characteristic of the energy of Dickens in regard to it than of the eagerness of every one addressed to give what help they could. Making personal mention of his fellow-sharers in the enterprise he describes the troop, in one of those letters, as "the most easily governable company "of actors on earth;" and to this he had doubtless brought them, but not very easily. One or two of his managerial troubles at rehearsals remain on record in letters to myself, and may give amusement still. Comedy and farces are referred to indiscriminately, but the farces were the most recurring plague. "Good Heaven! I find "that A. hasn't twelve words, and I am in hourly "expectation of rebellion!"—"You were right "about the green baize, that it would certainly

“muffle the voices; and some of our actors, by
 “Jove, haven’t too much of that commodity at
 “the best.”—“B. shocked me so much the other
 “night by a restless, stupid movement of his
 “hands in his first scene with you, that I took a
 “turn of an hour with him yesterday morning,
 “and I hope ‘quieted his nerves a little.”—“I
 “made a desperate effort to get C. to give up his
 “part. Yet in spite of all the trouble he gives
 “me I am sorry for him, he is so evidently hurt-
 “by his own sense of not doing well. He clutched
 “the part, however, tenaciously; and three weary
 “times we dragged through it last night.”—“That
 “infernal E. forgets everything.”—“I plainly see
 “that F. when nervous, which he is sure to be,
 “loses his memory. “Moreover his asides are in-
 “audible, even at Miss Kelly’s; and as regularly
 “as I stop him to say them again, he exclaims
 “(with a face of agony) that ‘he’ll speak loud on
 “‘the night,’ as if anybody ever did without
 “doing it always!”—“G. not born for it at all,
 “and too innately conceited, I much fear, to do
 “anything well. I thought him better last night,
 “but I would as soon laugh at a kitchen poker.”
 —“Fancy H., ten days after the casting of that
 “farce, wanting F.’s part therein! Having himself
 “an excellent old man in it already, and a quite
 “admirable part in the other farce.” From which
 it will appear that my friend’s office was not a
 sinecure, and that he was not, as few amateur-
 managers have ever been, without the experiences
 of Peter Quince. Fewer still, I suspect, have

LONDON:
1847.

Troubles at
rehearsals.

Managerial
exertion.

LONDON:
1847.
its result.

fought through them with such perfect success, for the company turned out at last would have done credit to any enterprise. They deserved the term applied to them by Maclise, who had invented it first for Macready, on his being driven to "star" in the provinces when his managements in London closed. They were "splendid strollers." *

Leigh Hunt's
account.

* I think it right to place on record here Leigh Hunt's own allusion to the incident (*Autobiography*, p. 432), though it will be thought to have too favourable a tone, and I could have wished that other names had also found mention in it. But I have already (p. 230 of Vol. III.) stated quite unaffectedly my own opinion of the very modest pretensions of the whole affair, and these kind words of Hunt may stand *valeant quantum*. "Simultaneous with the latest movement about "the pension was one on the part of my admirable friend "Dickens and other distinguished men, Forsters and Jerrolds, "who, combining kindly purpose with an amateur inclination for the stage, had condescended to show to the public "what excellent actors they could have been, had they so "pleased,—what excellent actors, indeed, some of them "were. . . . They proposed . . . a benefit for myself, . . . "and the piece performed on the occasion was Ben Jonson's "*Every Man in his Humour*. . . . If anything had been "needed to show how men of letters include actors, on the "common principle of the greater including the less, these "gentlemen would have furnished it. Mr. Dickens's Bobadil "had a spirit in it of intellectual apprehension beyond any "thing the existing stage has shown . . . and Mr. Forster "delivered the verses of Ben Jonson with a musical flow and "a sense of their grace and beauty unknown, I believe, to "the recitation of actors at present. At least I have never "heard anything like it since Edmund Kean's." . . . To this

On Monday the 26th July we played at MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL: 1847.
 Manchester, and on Wednesday the 28th at

may be added some lines from Lord Lytton's prologue Lord Lytton's prologue.
 spoken at Liverpool, of which I have not been able to find
 a copy, if indeed it was printed at the time; but the verses
 come so suddenly and completely back to me, as I am writ-
 ing after twenty-five years, that in a small way they recall a
 more interesting effort of memory told me once by Macready.
 On a Christmas night at Drury Lane there came a necessity
 to put up the *Gamester*, which he had not played since he
 was a youth in his father's theatre thirty years before. He
 went to rehearsal shrinking from the long and heavy study Anecdote of Macready.
 he should have to undergo, when, with the utterance of the
 opening sentence, the entire words of the part came back,
 including even a letter which Beverley has to read, and which
 it is the property-man's business to supply. My lines come
 back as unexpectedly; but with pleasanter music than any in
 Mr. Moore's dreary tragedy, as a few will show.

"Mild amid foes, within a prison free,
 "He comes . . . our grey-hair'd bard of Rimini!
 "Comes with the pomp of memories in his train,
 "Pathos and wit, sweet pleasure and sweet pain!
 "Comes with familiar smile and cordial tone,
 "Our hearths' wise cheerer!—Let us cheer his own!
 "Song links her children with a golden thread,
 "To aid the living bard strides forth the dead.
 "Hark the frank music of the elder age—
 "Ben Jonson's giant tread sounds ringing up the stage!
 "Hail! the large shapes our fathers loved! again
 "Wellbred's light ease, and Kately's jealous pain.
 "Cob shall have sense, and Stephen be polite,
 "Brainworm shall preach, and Bobadil shall fight—
 "Each, here, a merit not his own shall find,
 "And *Every Man the Humour* to be kind."

LONDON:
1847.

Receipts and
expenses.

At Broad-
stairs.

Appearance
of Mrs. Gamp.

Liverpool; the comedy being followed on the first night by *A Good Night's Rest* and *Turning the Tables*, and on the second by *Comfortable Lodgings, or Paris in 1750*; and the receipts being, on the first night £440 12s., and on the second, £463 8s. 6d. But though the married members of the company who took their wives defrayed that part of the cost, and every one who acted paid three pounds ten to the benefit-fund for his hotel charges, the expenses were necessarily so great that the profit was reduced to four hundred guineas, and, handsomely as this realised the design, expectations had been raised to five hundred. There was just that shade of disappointment, therefore, when, shortly after we came back and Dickens had returned to Broadstairs, I was startled by a letter from him. On the 3rd of August he had written: "All well. Children" (who had been going through whooping cough) "immensely improved. Business arising out of "the late blaze of triumph, worse than ever." Then came what startled me, the very next day. As if his business were not enough, it had occurred to him that he might add the much longed-for hundred pounds to the benefit-fund by a little jeu d'esprit in form of a history of the trip, to be published with illustrations from the artists; and his notion was to write it in the character of Mrs. Gamp. It was to be, in the phraseology of that notorious woman, a new "Piljians Projiss;" and was to bear upon the title page its description as an Account of a late Ex-

pedition into the North, for an Amateur Theatrical Benefit, written by Mrs. Gamp (who was an eye-witness), Inscribed to Mrs. Harris, Edited by Charles Dickens, and published, with illustrations on wood by so and so, in aid of the Benefit-fund. "What do you think of this idea for it?"

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Fancy for a
jeu d'esprit.

"The argument would be, that Mrs. Gamp, being "on the eve of an excursion to Margate as a relief from her professional fatigues, comes to the "knowledge of the intended excursion of our "party; hears that several of the ladies concerned "are in an interesting situation; and decides to "accompany the party unbeknown, in a second-class carriage—"in case." There, she finds a "gentleman from the Strand in a checked suit, "who is going down with the wigs"—the theatrical hairdresser employed on these occasions, Mr. Wilson, had eccentric points of character that were a fund of infinite mirth to Dickens—"and to his politeness Mrs. Gamp is indebted for "much support and countenance during the excursion. She will describe the whole thing in "her own manner: sitting, in each place of performance, in the orchestra, next the gentleman "who plays the kettle-drums. She gives her critical opinion of Ben Jonson as a literary character, and refers to the different members of the "party, in the course of her description of the "trip: having always an invincible animosity towards Jerrold, for Caudle reasons. She addresses herself, generally, to Mrs. Harris, to "whom the book is dedicated,—but is discursive.

Mrs. Gamp at
the play.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Artist-failure.

Unfinished
fancy.

"Amount of matter, half a sheet of *Dombey*: may 'be a page or so more, but not less.' Alas! it never arrived at even that small size, but perished prematurely, as I feared it would, from failure of the artists to furnish needful nourishment. Of course it could not live alone. Without suitable illustration it must have lost its point and pleasantry. 'Mac will make a little garland of the ladies for the title-page. Egg and Stone will themselves originate something fanciful, and I will settle with Cruikshank and Leech. I have no doubt the little thing will be droll and attractive.' So it certainly would have been, if the Thanes of art had not fallen from him; but on their desertion it had to be abandoned after the first few pages were written. They were placed at my disposal then; and, though the little jest has lost much of its flavour now, I cannot find it in my heart to omit them here. There are so many friends of Mrs. Gamp who will rejoice at this unexpected visit from her!

"I. MRS. GAMP'S ACCOUNT OF HER CONNEXION
"WITH THIS AFFAIR.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

"Which Mrs. Harris's own words to me, was 'these: 'Sairey Gamp,' she says, 'why not go to 'Margate? 'Srimps,' says that dear creetur, 'is to 'your liking, Sairey; why not go to Margate for 'a week, bring your constitootion up with 'srimps, and come back to them loving arts as 'knows and wallies of you, blooming? Sairey,'

"Mrs. Harris says, 'you are but poorly. Don't
"denige it, Mrs. Gamp, for books is in your
"looks. You must have rest. Your mind,' she
"says, 'is too strong for you; it gets you down
"and treads upon you, Sairey. It is useless to
"disguise the fact—the blade is a wearing out
"the sheets.' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'I
"could not undertake to say, and I will not de-
"ceive you ma'am, that I am the woman I could
"wish to be. The time of worrit as I had with
"Mrs. Colliber, the baker's lady, which was so
"bad in her mind with her first, that she would
"not so much as look at bottled stout, and kept
"to gruel through the month, has agued me,
"Mrs. Harris. But ma'am,' I says to her, 'talk
"not of Margate, for if I do go anywheres, it is
"elsewheres and not there.' 'Sairey,' says Mrs.
"Harris, solemn, 'whence this mystery? If I have
"ever deceived the hardest-working, soberest,
"and best of women, which her name is well
"beknown is S. Gamp Midwife Kingsgate Street
"High Holborn, mention it. If not,' says Mrs.
"Harris, with the tears a standing in her eyes,
"reweal your intentions.' 'Yes, Mrs. Harris,' I
"says, 'I will. Well I knows you Mrs. Harris;
"well you knows me; well we both knows wot
"the characters of one another is. Mrs. Harris
"then,' I says, 'I *have* heerd as there *is* a expedi-
"tion going down to Manjestir and Liverspool,
"a play-acting. If I goes anywheres for change,
"it is along with that.' Mrs. Harris clasps her
"hands, and drops into a chair, as if her time

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

Confidences
with Mrs.
Harris.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

Alarm of Mrs.
Harris.

Leigh Hunt
and Poole.

"was come—which I know'd it couldn't be, by rights, for six weeks odd. 'And have I lived to 'hear,' she says, 'of Sairey Gamp, as always 'kept hersef respectable, in company with play-actors!' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'be not 'alarmed—not reg'lar play-actors—hammertooors.' 'Thank Evans!' says Mrs. Harris, and bustiges 'into a flood of tears.

"When the sweet creetur had compoged hersef (which a sip of brandy and water warm, and sugared pleasant, with a little nutmeg did it), I proceeds in these words. 'Mrs. Harris, I am 'told as these hammertooors are litter'ry, and 'artistickle.' 'Sairey,' says that best of wimmin, 'with a shiver and a slight relasp, 'go on, it might 'be worse.' 'I likewise hears,' I says to her, 'that they're agoin play-acting, for the benefit of 'two litter'ry men; one as has had his wrongs a 'long time ago, and has got his rights at last, 'and one as has made a many people merry 'in his time, but is very dull and sick and lonely 'his own sef, indeed.' 'Sairey,' says Mrs. Harris, 'you're an English woman, and that's no business 'of you'rn."

"'No, Mrs. Harris,' I says, 'that's very true; 'I hope I knows my dooty and my country. But,' 'I says, 'I am informed as there is Ladies in this 'party, and that half a dozen of 'em, if not more, 'is in various stages of a interesting state. Mrs. 'Harris, you and me well knows what Ingeins 'often does. If I accompanies this expedition, 'unbeknown and second cladge, may I not com-

“bine my calling with change of air, and prove
 “‘a service to my feller creeturs?’ ‘Sairey,’ was
 “Mrs. Harris’s reply, ‘you was born to be a
 “‘blessing to your sex, and bring ’em through it.
 “‘Good go with you! But keep your distance
 “‘till called in, Lord bless you Mrs. Gamp; for
 “‘people is known by the company they keeps,
 “‘and litterary and artistickle society might be
 “‘the ruin of you before you was aware, with
 “‘your best customers, both sick and monthly, if
 “‘they took a pride in themselves.’

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

Ticklish
society.

“II. MRS. GAMP IS DESCRIPTIVE.

“The number of the cab had a seven in it I
 “think, and a ought I know—and if this should
 “meet his eye (which it was a black ’un, new
 “done, that he saw with; the other was tied up),
 “I give him warning that he’d better take that
 “‘umbereller and patten to the Hackney-coach
 “Office before he repents it. He was a young
 “man in a weskit with sleeves to it and strings
 “behind, and needn’t flatter himself with a sup-
 “pogition of escape, as I gave this description of
 “him to the Police the moment I found he had
 “drove off with my property; and if he thinks
 “there an’t laws enough he’s much mistook—I tell
 “him that.

Mrs. Gamp’s
cabman.

“I do assure you, Mrs. Harris, when I stood
 “in the railways office that morning with my
 “bundle on my arm and one patten in my hand,
 “you might have knocked me down with a feather,

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

George
Cruikshank.

Mr. Wilson
the hair-
dresser.

"far less porkmangers which was a lumping against me, continual and sewere all round. I was "drove about like a brute animal and almost "worritted into fits, when a gentleman with a "large shirt-collar and a hook nose, and a eye "like one of Mr. Sweedlepipes's hawks, and long "locks of hair, and wiskers that I wouldn't have "no lady as I was engaged to meet suddenly a "turning round a corner, for any sum of money "you could offer me, says, laughing, 'Halloa, Mrs. "'Gamp, what are *you* up to!' I didn't know him "from a man (except by his clothes); but I says "faintly, 'If you're a Christian man, show me "'where to get a second-cladge ticket for Man- "jester, and have me put in a carriage, or I shall "'drop!' Which he kindly did, in a cheerful "kind of a way, skipping about in the strangest "manner as ever I see, making all kinds of ac- "tions, and looking and vinking at me from under "the brim of his hat (which was a good deal "turned up), to that extent, that I should have "thought he meant something but for being so "flurried as not to have no thoughts at all until "I was put in a carriage along with a individgle "—the politest as ever I see—in a shepherd's "plaid suit with a long gold watch-guard hanging "round his neck, and his hand a trembling through "nervousness worse than a aspian leaf.

"'I'm wery appy, ma'am,' he says—the politest "vice as ever I heerd!—'to go down with a lady "'belonging to our party.'

"'Our party, sir!' I says.

"'Yes, ma'am,' he says, 'I'm Mr. Wilson. I'm
"going down with the wigs.'

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

"Mrs. Harris, when he said he was agoing
"down with the wigs, such was my state of con-
"fugion and worrit that I thought he must be
"connected with the Government in some ways
"or another, but directly moment he explains
"himself, for he says:

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

"'There's not a theatre in London worth men-
"tioning that I don't attend punctually. There's
"five-and-twenty wigs in these boxes, ma'am,'
"he says, a pinting towards a heap of luggage, 'as
"was worn at the Queen's Fancy Ball. There's
"a black wig, ma'am,' he says, 'as was worn by
"Garrick; there's a red one, ma'am,' he says,
"as was worn by Kean; there's a brown one,
"ma'am,' he says, 'as was worn by Kemble;
"there's a yellow one, ma'am,' he says, 'as was
"made for Cooke; there's a grey one, ma'am,' he
"says, 'as I measured Mr. Young for, myself; and
"there's a white one, ma'am, that Mr. Macready
"went mad in. There's a flaxen one as was got up
"express for Jenny Lind the night she came out
"at the Italian Opera. It was very much ap-
"plauded was that wig, ma'am, through the
"evening. It had a great reception. The audience
"broke out, the moment they see it.'

Wig expe-
riences.

"'Are you in Mr. Sweedlepipes's line, sir?' I
says.

In the
Sweedle-
pipes line.

"Which is that, ma'am?' he says—the softest
and genteelest vice I ever heerd, I do declare,
"Mrs. Harris!

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

"'Hair-dressing,' I says.

"'Yes, ma'am,' he replies, 'I have that honour.

"'Do you see this, ma'am?' he says, holding up
"his right hand.

"'I never see such a trembling,' I says to
"him. And I never did!

"'All along of Her Majesty's Costume Ball,
"ma'am,' he says. 'The excitement did it. Two
"hundred and fifty-seven ladies of the first rank
"and fashion had their heads got up on that oc-
"casion by this hand, and my t'other one. I
"was at it eight-and-forty hours on my feet,
"ma'am, without rest. It was a Powder ball,
"ma'am. We have a Powder piece at Liverpool.
"Have I not the pleasure,' he says, looking at
"me curious, 'of addressing Mrs. Gamp?'

Fatigues of a
powder ball.

"'Gamp I am, sir,' I replies. 'Both by name
"and natur.'

C. D.'s
moustache
and whiskers.

"'Would you like to see your beeograffer's
"moustache and wiskers, ma'am?' he says. 'I've
"got 'em in this box.'

"'Drat my becograffer, sir,' I says, 'he has
"given me no region to wish to know anythink
"about him.'

"'Oh, Missus Gamp, I ask your parden'—I
"never see such a polite man, Mrs. Harris! 'P'raps,'
"he says, 'if you're not of the party, you don't
"know who it was that assisted you into this
"carriage!'

"'No, Sir,' I says, 'I don't, indeed.'

The great
George.

"'Why, ma'am,' he says, a wisperin', 'that was
"George, ma'am.'

“‘What George, sir? I don’t know no George,’
“says I.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

“‘The great George, ma’am,’ says he. ‘The
“‘Crookshanks.’”

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

“If you’ll believe me, Mrs. Harris, I turns my
“head, and see the wery man a making picturs of
“me on his thumb nail, at the winder! while an-
“other of ’em—a tall, slim, melancolly gent, with
“dark hair and a bage vice—looks over his
“shoulder, with his head o’ one side as if he un-
“derstood the subject, and coolly says, ‘I’ve
“draw’d her several times—in Punch,’ he says
“too! The owdacious wretch!”

John Leech.

“‘Which I never touches, Mr. Wilson,’ I re-
“marks out loud—I couldn’t have helped it, Mrs.
“Harris, if you had took my life for it!—‘which
“‘I never touches, Mr. Wilson, on account of the
“‘lemon!’

“‘Hush!’ says Mr. Wilson. ‘There he is!’

“I only see a fat gentleman with curly black
“hair and a merry face, a standing on the plat-
“form rubbing his two hands over one another, as
“if he was washing of ’em, and shaking his head
“and shoulders wery much; and I was a wonder-
“ing wot Mr. Wilson meant, wen he says, ‘There’s
“‘Dougladge, Mrs. Gamp!’ he says. ‘There’s him
“‘as wrote the life of Mrs. Caudle!’

Mark Lemon.

“Mrs. Harris, wen I see that little willain
“bodily before me, it give me such a turn that I
“was all in a tremble. If I hadn’t lost my um-
“bereller in the cab, I must have done him a in-
“jury with it! Oh the bragian little traitor! right

Douglas
Jerrold.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

Dislike of
"Douglass."

Dudley
Costello.

Frank Stone.

Augustus Egg.

"among the ladies, Mrs. Harris; looking his
"wickedest and deceitfullest of eyes while he was
"a talking to 'em; laughing at his own jokes as
"loud as you please; holding his hat in one hand
"to cool his-sef, and tossing back his iron-grey
"mop of a head of hair with the other, as if it
"was so much shavings—there, Mrs. Harris, I see
"him, getting encouragement from the pretty
"delooded creeturs, which never know'd that sweet
"saint, Mrs. C, as I did, and being treated with
"as much confidence as if he'd never wiolated
"none of the domestic ties, and never showed up
"nothing! Oh the aggrawation of that Douglass!
"Mrs. Harris, if I hadn't apologized to Mr. Wil-
"son, and put a little bottle to my lips which was
"in my pocket for the journey, and which it is
"very rare indeed I have about me, I could not
"have abared the sight of him—there, Mrs. Harris!
"I could not!—I must have tore him, or have
"give way and fainted.

"While the bell was a ringing, and the lug-
"gage of the hammertoors in great confugion—
"all a litter'ry indeed—was handled up, Mr.
"Wilson demeens his-sef politer than ever. 'That,'
"he says, 'Mrs. Gamp,' a pinting to a officer-
"looking gentleman, that a lady with a little
"basket was a taking care on, 'is another of our
"party. He's a author too—continivally going
"up the walley of the Muses, Mrs. Gamp. There,'
"he says, alluding to a fine looking, portly gen-
"tleman, with a face like a amiable full moon,
"and a short mild gent, with a pleasant smile,

"is two more of our artists, Mrs. G, well be-
 "knowed at the Royal Academy, as sure as
 "stones is stones, and eggs is eggs. This reso-
 "lute gent,' he says, 'a coming along here as is
 "aperrently going to take the railways by storm
 "—him with the tight legs, and his weskit very J. F.
 "much buttoned, and his mouth very much shut,
 "and his coat a flying open, and his heels a
 "giving it to the platform, is a cricket and
 "beeograffer, and our principal tragegian.' 'But
 "who,' says I, when the bell had left off, and
 "the train had begun to move, 'who, Mr. Wilson,
 "is the wild gent in the prespiration, that's been
 "a tearing up and down all this time with a
 "great box of papers under his arm, a talking to
 "everybody wery indistinct, and exciting of him- C. D.
 "self dreadful?' 'Why?' says Mr. Wilson, with
 "a smile. 'Because, sir,' I says, 'he's being left
 "behind.' 'Good God!' cries Mr. Wilson, turn-
 "ing pale and putting out his head, 'it's *your*
 "beeograffer—the Manager—and he has got the
 "money, Mrs. Gamp!' Hous'ever, some one
 "chucked him into the train and we went off.
 "At the first shreek of the whistle, Mrs. Harris,
 "I turned white, for I had took notice of some
 "of them dear creeturs as was the cause of my
 "being in company, and I know'd the danger
 "that—but Mr. Wilson, which is a married man,
 "puts his hand on mine, and says, 'Mrs. Gamp,
 "'calm yourself; it's only the Ingen.'"

Of those of the party with whom these
 humorous liberties were taken there are only two

BROAD-
 STAIRS:
 1847:

Mrs. Gamp
 with the
 strollers.

Only the
 engine!

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Mrs. Gamp
with the
strollers.

Cruikshank's
Bottle.

now living to complain of their friendly caricaturist, and Mr. Cruikshank will perhaps join me in a frank forgiveness not the less heartily for the kind words about himself that reached me from Broadstairs not many days after Mrs. Gamp. "At Canterbury yesterday" (2nd of September) "I bought George Cruikshank's *Bottle*. I think it very powerful indeed: the two last plates most admirable, except that the boy and girl in the very last are too young, and the girl more like a circus-phenomenon than that no-phenomenon she is intended to represent. I question, however, whether anybody else living could have done it so well. There is a woman in the last plate but one, garrulous about the murder, with a child in her arms, that is as good as Hogarth. Also, the man who is stooping down, looking at the body. The philosophy of the thing, as a great lesson, I think all wrong; because to be striking, and original too, the drinking should have begun in sorrow, or poverty, or ignorance—the three things in which, in its awful aspect, it *does* begin. The design would then have been a double-handed sword—but too 'radical' for good old George, I suppose."

Profits of
Dombey.

The same letter made mention of other matters of interest. His accounts for the first half-year of *Dombey* were so much in excess of what had been expected from the new publishing arrangements, that from this date all embarrassments connected with money were brought to a close. His future profits varied of course with his vary-

ing sales, but there was always enough, and savings were now to begin. "The profits of the "half-year are brilliant. Deducting the hundred "pounds a month paid six times, I have still to "receive two thousand two hundred and twenty "pounds, which I think is tidy. Don't you? . . . "Stone is still here, and I lamed his foot by walk- "ing him seventeen miles the day before yester- "day; but otherwise he flourisheth. . . Why don't "you bring down a carpet-bag-full of books, and "take possession of the drawing-room all the "morning? My opinion is that Goldsmith would "die more easy by the seaside. Charley and "Walley have been taken to school this morning "in high spirits, and at London Bridge will be "folded in the arms of Blimber. The Govern- "ment is about to issue a Sanitary commission, "and Lord John, I am right well pleased to say, "has appointed Henry Austin secretary." Mr. Austin, who afterwards held the same office under the Sanitary act, had married his youngest sister Letitia; and of his two youngest brothers I may add that Alfred, also a civil-engineer, became one of the sanitary inspectors, and that Augustus was now placed in a city employment by Mr. Thomas Chapman, which after a little time he surrendered, and then found his way to America.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

The time
come for
savings.

Brother-in-
law's ap-
pointment.

Younger
brothers.

The next Broadstairs letter (5th of September) resumed the subject of Goldsmith, whose life I was then bringing nearly to completion. "Sup- "posing your *Goldsmith* made a general sensation, "what should you think of doing a cheap edition

BROAD-
STAIRS;
1847.

Design for
edition of old
novelists.

The Praslin
tragedy in
Paris.

Another
dropped
design.*

"of his works? I have an idea that we might do
"some things of that sort with considerable effect.
"There is really no edition of the great British
"novelists in a handy nice form, and would it
"not be a likely move to do it with some attrac-
"tive feature that could not be given to it by the
"Teggs and such people? Supposing one wrote
"an essay on Fielding for instance, and another
"on Smollett, and another on Sterne, recalling
"how one read them as a child (no one read
"them younger than I, I think), and how one
"gradually grew up into a different knowledge
"of them, and so forth—would it not be interest-
"ing to many people? I should like to know if
"you descry anything in this. It is one of the
"dim notions fluctuating within me.* . . The pro-
"fits, brave indeed, are four hundred pounds
"more than the utmost I expected. . . The same
"yearnings have been mine, in reference to the
"Praslin business. It is pretty clear to me, for
"one thing, that the Duchess was one of the most
"uncomfortable women in the world, and that it
"would have been hard work for anybody to
"have got on with her. It is strange to see a
"bloody reflection of our friends Eugène Sue and

* Another, which for many reasons we may regret went also into the limbo of unrealized designs, is sketched in the subjoined (7th of January, 1848). "Mac and I think of
"going to Ireland for six weeks in the spring, and seeing
"whether anything is to be done there, in the way of a
"book? I fancy it might turn out well." The Mac of course is Maclise.

"Dumas in the whole melodrama. Don't you
 "think so. . . remembering what we often said of
 "the canker at the root of all that Paris life? I
 "dreamed of you, in a wild manner, all last
 "night. . . A sea fog here, which prevents one's
 "seeing the low-water mark. A circus on the
 "cliff to the right, and of course I have a box
 "to-night! Deep slowness in the inimitable's
 "brain. A shipwreck on the Goodwin sands last
 "Sunday, which WALLY, with a hawk's eye, SAW
 "GO DOWN: for which assertion, subsequently con-
 "firmed and proved, he was horribly maltreated
 "at the time."

BROAD-
 STAIRS:
 1847.

Penalty for
 seeing before
 others.

Devonshire-terrace meanwhile had been left
 by his tenant; and coming up joyfully himself to
 take possession, he brought for completion in his
 old home an important chapter of *Dombey*. On
 the way he lost his portmanteau, but "Thank
 "God! the MS. of the chapter wasn't in it. When-
 "ever I travel, and have anything of that valuable
 "article, I always carry it in my pocket."* He
 had begun at this time to find difficulties in writ-
 ing at Broadstairs, of which he told me on his
 return. "Vagrant music is getting to that height

Loss of
 portmanteau.

* "Here we are" (23rd of August) "in the noble old
 "premises; and very nice they look, all things considered. . .
 "Trifles happen to me which occur to nobody else. My
 "portmanteau 'fell off' a cab last night somewhere between
 "London-bridge and here. It contained on a moderate cal-
 "culation £70 worth of clothes. I have no shirt to put on,
 "and am obliged to send out to a barber to come and
 "shave me."

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

Street-music.

Margate
Theatre.

Manager
Dowton.

"here, and is so impossible to be escaped from, "that I fear Broadstairs and I must part company "in time to come. Unless it pours of rain, I can- "not write half-an-hour without the most excru- "ciating organs, fiddles, bells, or glee-singers. "There is a violin of the most torturing kind "under the window now (time, ten in the morn- "ing) and an Italian box of music on the steps— "both in full blast." He closed with a mention of improvements in the Margate theatre since his memorable last visit. In the past two years it had been managed by a son of the great come- dian, Dowton, with whose name it is pleasant to connect this note. "We went to the manager's "benefit on Wednesday" (10th of September): "*As You Like It* really very well done, and a "most excellent house. Mr. Dowton delivered a "sensible and modest kind of speech on the "occasion, setting forth his conviction that a "means of instruction and entertainment possess- "ing such a literature as the stage in England, "could not pass away; and, that what inspired "great minds, and delighted great men, two thou- "sand years ago, and did the same in Shake- "speare's day, must have within itself a principle "of life superior to the whim and fashion of the "hour. And with that, and with cheers, he "retired. He really seems a most respectable "man, and he has cleared out this dust-hole of "a theatre into something like decency."

He was to be in London at the end of the month: but I had from him meanwhile his pre-

face* for his first completed book in the popular edition (*Pickwick* being now issued in that form, with an illustration by Leslie); and sending me shortly after (12th of Sept.) the first few slips of the story of the *Haunted Man* proposed for his next Christmas book, he told me he must finish it in less than a month if it was to be done at all, *Dombey* having now become very importunate. This prepared me for his letter of a week's later date. "Have been at work all day, and am seedy in consequence. *Dombey* takes so much time, and requires to be so carefully done, that I really begin to have serious doubts whether it is wise to go on with the Christmas book. Your kind help is invoked. What do you think? Would there be any distinctly bad effect in holding this idea over for another twelvemonth? saying nothing whatever till November; and then announcing in the *Dombey* that its occupation of my entire time prevents the continuance of the Christmas series until next year, when it is proposed to be renewed. There might not be anything in that but a possibility of an extra lift for the little book when it did come—eh?

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

As to
Christmas
book.

Suggested
delay.

* "Do you see anything to object to in it? I have never had so much difficulty, I think, in setting about any slight thing; for I really didn't know that I had a word to say, and nothing seems to live 'twixt what *I have* said and silence. The advantage of it is, that the latter part opens an idea for future prefaces all through the series, and may serve perhaps to make a feature of them." (7th of September, 1847.)

The Life of Charles Dickens. IV.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1847.

A literary
Kitley.

Emendation
for *Hamlet*:

of doubtful
wisdom.

Public meet-
ings.

"On the other hand, I am very loath to lose the money. And still more so to leave any gap at Christmas firesides which I ought to fill. In short I am (forgive the expression) BLOWED if I know what to do. I am a literary Kitley—and you ought to sympathize and help. If I had no *Dombey*, I could write and finish the story with the bloom on—but there's the rub . . . Which unfamiliar quotation reminds me of a Shakspearian (put an e before the s; I like it much better) speculation of mine. What do you say to 'take arms against a sea of troubles' having been originally written 'make arms,' which is the action of swimming. It would get rid of a horrible grievance in the figure, and make it plain and apt. I think of setting up a claim to live in The House at Stratford, rent-free, on the strength of this suggestion. You are not to suppose that I am anything but disconcerted to-day, in the agitation of my soul concerning Christmas; but I have been brooding, like Dombey himself, over *Dombey* these two days, until I really can't afford to be depressed." To his Shakespearian suggestion I replied that it would hardly give him the claim he thought of setting up, for that swimming through your troubles would not be "opposing" them. And upon the other point I had no doubt of the wisdom of delay. The result was that the Christmas story was laid aside until the following year.

The year's closing incidents were his chairmanship at a meeting of the Leeds Mechanics'

Society on the 1st of December, and his opening of the Glasgow Athenæum on the 28th; where, to immense assemblages in both,* he contrasted the obstinacy and cruelty of the Power of ignorance with the docility and gentleness of the Power of knowledge; pointed the use of popular institutes in supplementing what is learnt first in life, by the later education for its employments and equipment for its domesticities and virtues, which the grown person needs from day to day as much as the child its reading and writing; and he closed at Glasgow with allusion to a bazaar set on foot by the ladies of the city, under patronage of the Queen, for adding books to its Athenæum library. "We never tire of the friendships Book-friends. "we form with books," he said, "and here they "will possess the added charm of association with "their donors. Some neighbouring Glasgow widow "will be mistaken for that remoter one whom Sir "Roger de Coverley could not forget; Sophia's "muff will be seen and loved, by another than

LEEDS AND
GLASGOW:
1847.

* From his notes on these matters I may quote. "The Leeds and Glasgow. "Leeds appears to be a very important institution, and I am "glad to see that George Stephenson will be there, besides "the local lights, inclusive of all the Baineses. They talk "at Glasgow of 6,000 people." (26th of November.) "You "have got Southey's *Holly Tree*. I have not. Put it in "your pocket to-day. It occurs to me (up to the eyes in a "mass of Glasgow Athenæum papers) that I could quote it "with good effect in the North." (24th of December.) "A "most brilliant demonstration last night, and I think I never "did better. Newspaper reports bad." (29th of December.)

EDINBURGH: "Tom Jones, going down the High-street some
1847-48.

Sheriff
Alison.

"winter day; and the grateful students of a library
"thus filled will be apt, as to the fair ones who
"have helped to people it, to couple them in their
"thoughts with Principles of the Population and
"Additions to the History of Europe, by an author
"of older date than Sheriff Alison." At which
no one laughed so loudly as the Sheriff himself,
who had cordially received Dickens as his guest,
and stood with him on the platform.

Stays with
Alison.

On the last day but one of the old year he
wrote to me from Edinburgh. "We came over
"this afternoon, leaving Glasgow at one o'clock.
"Alison lives in style in a handsome country
"house out of Glasgow, and is a capital fellow,
"with an agreeable wife, nice little daughter,
"cheerful niece, all things pleasant in his house-
"hold. I went over the prison and lunatic asylum
"with him yesterday;* at the Lord Provost's had
"gorgeous state-lunch with the Town Council; and
"was entertained at a great dinner-party at night.
"Unbounded hospitality and enthoozymoosy the
"order of the day, and I have never been more
"heartily received anywhere, or enjoyed myself
"more completely. The great chemist, Gregory,
"who spoke at the meeting, returned with us to

Friendly
reception.

* "Tremendous distress at Glasgow, and a truly damnable
"jail, exhibiting the separate system in a most absurd and
"hideous form. Governor practical and intelligent; very
"anxious for the associated silent system; and much com-
"forted by my fault-finding." (30th of December.)

 LONDON:
1848.

"Edinburgh to-day, and gave me many new lights
 "on the road regarding the extraordinary pains
 "Macaulay seems for years to have taken to make
 "himself disagreeable and disliked here. No one
 "else, on that side, would have had the remotest
 "chance of being unseated at the last election;
 "and, though Gregory voted for him, I thought
 "he seemed quite as well pleased as anybody
 "else that he didn't come in . . . I am sorry
 "to report the Scott Monument a failure. It
 "is like the spire of a Gothic church taken
 "off and stuck in the ground." On the first
 day of 1848, still in Edinburgh, he wrote again:
 "Jeffrey, who is obliged to hold a kind of morn-
 "ing court in his own study during the holi-
 "days, came up yesterday in great consternation,
 "to tell me that a person had just been to make
 "and sign a declaration of bankruptcy; and that
 "on looking at the signature he saw it was James
 "Sheridan Knowles. He immediately sent after,
 "and spoke with him; and of what passed I am
 "eager to talk with you." The talk will bring
 back the main subject of this chapter, from which
 another kind of strolling has led me away; for
 its results were other amateur performances, of
 which the object was to benefit Knowles.

 Scott-
monument.

 Jeffrey and
Knowles.

This was the year when a committee had been
 formed for the purchase and preservation of
 Shakespeare's house at Stratford, and the perform-
 ances in question took the form of contributions
 to the endowment of a curatorship to be held by
 the author of *Virginia* and the *Hunchback*. The

 Purchase of
Shakespeare's
house.

LONDON:
1848.

Scheme to
benefit
Knowles.

Civil-list
pensions.

endowment was abandoned upon the town and council of Stratford finally (and very properly) taking charge of the house; but the sum realised was not withdrawn from the object really desired, and one of the finest of dramatists profited yet more largely by it than Leigh Hunt did by the former enterprise. It may be proper to remark also, that, like Leigh Hunt, Knowles received soon after, through Lord John Russell, the same liberal pension; and that smaller claims to which attention had been similarly drawn were not forgotten; Mr. Poole, after much kind help from the Bounty Fund, being in 1850 placed on the Civil List for half the amount by the same minister and friend of letters.

Dickens threw himself into the new scheme with all his old energy*; and prefatory mention

C. D.'s In-
structions for
rehearsals.

* It would amuse the reader, but occupy too much space, to add to my former illustrations of his managerial troubles; but from an elaborate paper of rules for rehearsals, which I have found in his handwriting, I quote the opening and the close. "Remembering the very imperfect condition of all "our plays at present, the general expectation in reference to "them, the kind of audience before which they will be pre- "sented, and the near approach of the nights of performance, "I hope everybody concerned will abide by the following "regulations, and will aid in strictly carrying them out." Elaborate are the regulations set forth, but I take only the three last. "Silence, on the stage and in the theatre, to be "faithfully observed; the lobbies &c. being always available "for conversation. No book to be referred to on the stage; "but those who are imperfect to take their words from the "prompter. Everyone to act, as nearly as possible, as on

 LONDON:
1848-50.

may be made of our difficulty in selection of a suitable play to alternate with our old Ben Jonson. The *Alchemist* had been such a favourite with some of us, that, before finally laying it aside, we went through two or three rehearsals, in which I recollect thinking Dickens's Sir Epicure Mammon as good as anything he had done; and now the same trouble, with the same result, arising from a vain desire to please everybody, was taken successively with Beaumont and Fletcher's *Beggar's Bush*, and Goldsmith's *Good Natured Man*, with Jerrold's characteristic drama of the *Rent Day*, and Bulwer's masterly comedy of *Money*. Choice was at last made of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives*, in which Lemon played Falstaff, I took again the jealous husband as in Jonson's play, and Dickens was Justice Shallow; to which was added a farce, *Love, Law, and Physick*, in which Dickens took the part he had acted long ago, before his days of authorship; and, besides the professional actresses engaged, we had for our Dame Quickly

 Plays re-
hearsed.

Merry Wives
chosen.

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"the night of performance; everyone to speak out, so as to be audible through the house. And every mistake of exit, entrance, or situation, to be corrected *three times* successively." He closes thus. "All who were concerned in the first getting up of *Every Man in his Humour*, and remember how carefully the stage was always kept then, and who have been engaged in the late rehearsals of the *Merry Wives*, and have experienced the difficulty of getting on, or off: of being heard, or of hearing anybody else: will, I am sure, acknowledge the indispensable necessity of these regulations."

LONDON:
1848-50.

Perform-
ances.

the lady to whom the world owes incomparably the best *Concordance* to Shakespeare that has ever been published, Mrs. Cowden Clarke. The success was undoubtedly very great. At Manchester, Liverpool, and Edinburgh there were single representations; but Birmingham and Glasgow had each two nights, and two were given at the Haymarket, on one of which the Queen and Prince were present. The gross receipts from the nine performances, before the necessary large deductions for London and local charges, were two thousand five hundred and fifty-one pounds and eightpence.* The first representation was in London on the 15th of April, the last in Glasgow on the 20th of July, and everywhere Dickens was the leading figure. In the enjoyment as in the labour he was first. His animal spirits, unresting and supreme, were the attraction of rehearsal at morning, and of the stage at night. At the quiet early dinner, and the more jovial unrestrained supper, where all engaged were assembled daily, his was the brightest face, the lightest step, the pleasantest word. There seemed to be no rest needed for that wonderful vitality.

My allusion to the last of these splendid strollings in aid of what we believed to be the

* I give the sums taken at the several theatres. Haymarket, £319 14s.; Manchester, £266 12s. 6d.; Liverpool, £467 6s. 6d.; Birmingham, £327 10s., and £262 18s. 6d.; Edinburgh, £325 1s. 6d.; Glasgow, £471 7s. 8d., and (at half the prices of the first night) £210 10s.

interests of men of letters, shall be as brief as I can make it. Two winters after the present, at the close of November 1850, in the great hall of Lord Lytton's old family mansion in Knebworthpark, there were three private performances by the original actors in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*. All the circumstances and surroundings were very brilliant; some of the gentlemen of the county played both in the comedy and farces; our generous host was profuse of all noble encouragement; and amid the general pleasure and excitement hopes rose high. Recent experience had shown what the public interest in this kind of amusement might place within reach of its providers; and there came to be discussed the possibility of making permanent such help as had been afforded to fellow writers, by means of an endowment that should not be mere charity, but should combine indeed something of both pension-list and college-lectureship, without the drawbacks of either. It was not enough considered that schemes for self-help, to be successful, require from those they are meant to benefit, not only a general assent to their desirability, but zealous and active co-operation. Without discussing now, however, what will have to be stated hereafter, it suffices to say that the enterprise was set on foot, and the "Guild of Literature and "Art" originated at Knebworth. A five-act comedy was to be written by Sir Edward Lytton, and, when a certain sum of money had been obtained by public representations of it, the details of the

LONDON:
1850.

At Knebworth.

Origin of
Guild of
Literature
and Art.

A thing lost
sight of.

Preparations
for Guild.

LONDON:
1850.

C. D.'s farce
not written.

The farce
substituted.

scheme were to be drawn up, and appeal made to those whom it addressed more especially. In a very few months everything was ready, except a farce which Dickens was to have written to follow the comedy, and which unexpected cares of management and preparation were held to absolve him from. There were other reasons. "I have written the first scene," he told me (23rd March, 1851), "and it has droll points in it, 'more 'farcical points than you commonly find in 'farces,'* really better. Yet I am constantly 'striving, for my reputation's sake, to get into it 'a meaning that is impossible in a farce; constantly thinking of it, therefore, against the grain; and constantly impressed with a conviction that 'I could never act in it myself with that wild 'abandonment which can alone carry a farce off. 'Wherefore I have confessed to Bulwer Lytton 'and asked for absolution.' There was substituted a new farce of Lemon's, to which, however, Dickens soon contributed so many jokes and so much Gampish and other fun of his own, that it came to be in effect a joint piece of authorship; and Gabblewig, which the manager took to himself, was one of those personation parts requiring five or six changes of face, voice, and gait in the

* "Those Rabbits have more nature in them than you 'commonly find in Rabbits"—the self-commendatory remark of an aspiring animal-painter showing his piece to the most distinguished master in that line—was here in my friend's mind.

course of it, from which, as we have seen, he derived all the early theatrical ambition that the elder Mathews had awakened in him. "You have
 "no idea," he continued, "of the immensity of
 "the work as the time advances, for the Duke
 "even throws the whole of the audience on us, or
 "he would get (he says) into all manner of scrapes."
 The Duke of Devonshire had offered his house in Piccadilly for the first representations, and in his princely way discharged all the expenses attending them. A moveable theatre was built and set up in the great drawing-room, and the library was turned into a green-room.

LONDON
 AND
 PROVINCES:
 1851-52.

Princely help.

Not so Bad as We Seem was played for the first time at Devonshire-house on the 27th of May, 1851, before the Queen and Prince and as large an audience as places could be found for; *Mr. Nightingale's Diary* being the name given to the farce. The success abundantly realised the expectations formed; and, after many representations at the Hanover-square Rooms in London, strolling began in the country, and was continued at intervals for considerable portions of this and the following year. From much of it, illness and occupation disabled me, and substitutes had to be found; but to this I owe the opportunity now of closing with a characteristic picture of the course of the play, and of Dickens amid the incidents and accidents to which his theatrical career exposed him. The company carried with them, it should be said, the theatre constructed for Devonshire-house, as well as the admirable

Performance
 of Bulwer
 Lytton's
 comedy.

Travelling
 theatre and
 scenes.

SUNDER-
LAND:
1852.

scenes which Stanfield, David Roberts, Thomas Grieve, Telbin, Absolon, and Louis Haghe had painted as their generous free-offerings to the comedy; of which the representations were thus rendered irrespective of theatres or their managers, and took place in the large halls or concert-rooms of the various towns and cities.

SUNDERLAND.

"The enclosure forgotten in my last" (Dickens writes from Sunderland on the 29th of August 1852), "was a little printed announcement which I have had distributed at the doors wherever we go, knocking *Two o'Clock in the Morning* bang out of the bills. Funny as it used to be, it is become impossible to get anything out of it after the scream of *Mr. Nightingale's Diary*. The comedy is so far improved by the reductions which your absence and other causes have imposed on us, that it acts now only two hours and twenty-five minutes, all waits included, and goes 'like wildfire,' as Mr. Tonson* says. We have had prodigious houses, though smaller rooms (as to their actual size) than I had hoped for. The Duke was at Derby, and no end of minor radiances. Into the room at Newcastle

Success of
comedy and
farce.

At DERRY and
NEWCASTLE.

* Mr. Tonson was a small part in the comedy entrusted with much appropriateness to Mr. Charles Knight, whose *Autobiography* has this allusion to the first performance, which, as Mr. Pepys says, is "pretty to observe." "The actors and the audience were so close together that as Mr. Jacob Tonson sat in Wills's Coffee-house he could have touched with his clouded cane the Duke of Wellington." (iii. 116.)

“(where Lord Carlisle was by the bye) they squeezed
“six hundred people, at twelve and sixpence, into
“a space reasonably capable of holding three
“hundred. Last night, in a hall built like a
“theatre, with pit, boxes, and gallery, we had
“about twelve hundred—I dare say more. They
“began with a round of applause when Coote’s
“white waistcoat appeared in the orchestra, and
“wound up the farce with three deafening cheers.
“I never saw such good fellows. Stanney is their
“fellow-townsmen; was born here; and they ap-
“plauded his scene as if it were himself. But
“what I suffered from a dreadful anxiety that
“hung over me all the time, I can never describe.
“When we got here at noon, it appeared that the
“hall was a perfectly new one, and had only had
“the slates put upon the roof by torchlight over
“night. Farther, that the proprietors of some op-
“position rooms had declared the building to be
“unsafe, and that there was a panic in the town
“about it; people having had their money back,
“and being undecided whether to come or not,
“and all kinds of such horrors. I didn’t know
“what to do. The horrible responsibility of risk-
“ing an accident of that awful nature seemed to
“rest wholly upon me; for I had only to say we
“wouldn’t act, and there would be no chance of
“danger. I was afraid to take Sloman into council
“lest the panic should infect our men. I asked
“W. what *he* thought, and he consolingly ob-
“served that his digestion was so bad that death
“had no terrors for him! I went and looked at

SUNDER-
LAND:
1852.

At SUNDER-
LAND.

Stanfield's
fellow-townsmen.

Appre-
hensions.

Consoling
remark.

SUNDER-
LAND:
1852.

Troubles of a
manager.

Acting under
difficulties.

"the place; at the rafters, walls, pillars, and so
"forth; and fretted myself into a belief that they
"really were slight! To crown all, there was an
"arched iron roof without any brackets or pillars,
"on a new principle! The only comfort I had
"was in stumbling at length on the builder, and
"finding him a plain practical north-countryman
"with a foot rule in his pocket. I took him aside,
"and asked him should we, or could we, prop up
"any weak part of the place: especially the dress-
"ing-rooms, which were under our stage, the
"weight of which must be heavy on a new floor,
"and dripping wet walls. He told me there wasn't
"a stronger building in the world; and that, to
"allay the apprehension, they had opened it, on
"Thursday night, to thousands of the working
"people, and induced them to sing, and beat
"with their feet, and make every possible trial of
"the vibration. Accordingly there was nothing
"for it but to go on. I was in such dread, how-
"ever, lest a false alarm should spring up among
"the audience and occasion a rush, that I kept
"Catherine and Georgina out of the front. When
"the curtain went up and I saw the great sea of
"faces rolling up to the roof, I looked here and
"looked there, and thought I saw the gallery out
"of the perpendicular, and fancied the lights in
"the ceiling were not straight. Rounds of ap-
"plause were perfect agony to me, I was so afraid
"of their effect upon the building. I was ready
"all night to rush on in case of an alarm—a false
"alarm was my main dread—and implore the

SUNDER-
LAND:
1852.

"people for God's sake to sit still. I had our
"great farce-bell rung to startle Sir Geoffrey in-
"stead of throwing down a piece of wood, which
"might have raised a sudden apprehension. I
"had a palpitation of the heart, if any of our people
"stumbled up or down a stair. I am sure I never
"acted better, but the anxiety of my mind was so
"intense, and the relief at last so great, that I am
"half-dead to-day, and have not yet been able to
"eat or drink anything or to stir out of my room.
"I shall never forget it. As to the short time we
"had for getting the theatre up; as to the up-
"setting, by a runaway pair of horses, of one of
"the vans at the Newcastle railway station *with* Scenery over-
"all the scenery in it, every atom of which was turned.
"turned over; as to the fatigue of our carpenters,
"who have now been up four nights, and who
"were lying dead asleep in the entrances last
"night; I say nothing, after the other gigantic
"nightmare, except that Sloman's splendid know-
"ledge of his business, and the good temper and
"cheerfulness of all the workmen, are capital. I
"mean to give them a supper at Liverpool, and
"address them in a neat and appropriate speech.
"We dine at two to-day (it is now one) and go
"to Sheffield at four, arriving there at about ten.
"I had been as fresh as a daisy; walked from
"Nottingham to Derby, and from Newcastle here;
"but seem to have had my nerves crumpled up
"last night, and have an excruciating headache. Effects of
"That's all at present. I shall never be able to fright.

SUNDER-
LAND:
1852.

"bear the smell of new deal and fresh mortar
"again as long as I live."

Dinner at
Manchester.

Manchester and Liverpool closed the trip with enormous success at both places; and Sir Edward Lytton was present at a public dinner which was given in the former city, Dickens's brief word about it being written as he was setting foot in the train that was to bring him to London. "Bulwer spoke brilliantly at the Manchester dinner, and his earnestness and determination about the Guild was most impressive. It carried everything before it. They are now getting up annual subscriptions, and will give us a revenue to begin with. I swear I believe that people to be the greatest in the world. At Liverpool I had a Round Robin on the stage after the play was over, a place being left for your signature, and as I am going to have it framed, I'll tell Green to send it to Lincoln's-inn-fields. You have no idea how good Tenniel, Topham, and Collins have been in what they had to do."

A round
robin.

Mr. Wilkie
Collins.

These names, distinguished in art and letters, represent additions to the company who had joined the enterprise; and the last of them, Mr. Wilkie Collins, became, for all the rest of the life of Dickens, one of his dearest and most valued friends.

CHAPTER XLII.

SEASIDE HOLIDAYS.

1848—1851.

THE portion of Dickens's life over which his adventures of strolling extended was in other respects not without interest; and this chapter will deal with some of his seaside holidays before I pass to the publication in 1848 of the story of *The Haunted Man*, and to the establishment in 1850 of the Periodical which had been in his thoughts for half a dozen years before, and has had foreshadowings nearly as frequent in my pages.

LONDON:
1848.

Among the incidents of 1848 before the holiday season came, were the dethronement of Louis Philippe, and birth of the second French republic: on which I ventured to predict that a Gorehouse friend of ours, and *his* friend, would in three days be on the scene of action. The three days passed, and I had this letter. "Mardi, Février 29, 1848. MON CHER. Vous êtes homme de la plus grande pénétration! Ah, mon Dieu, que vous êtes absolument magnifique! Vous prévoyez presque toutes les choses qui vont arriver;

Louis
Philippe
dethroned.

Letter from
C. D.

LONDON:
1848:

French
missive from
C. D.

“et aux choses qui viennent d'arriver vous êtes
“merveilleusement au-fait. Ah, cher enfant, quelle
“idée sublime vous vous aviez à la tête quand
“vous prévités si clairement que M. le Comte
“Alfred d'Orsay se rendrait au pays de sa nais-
“sance! Quel magicien! Mais—c'est tout égal,
“mais—il n'est pas parti. Il reste à Gore-house,
“où, avant-hier, il y avait un grand diner à tout
“le monde. Mais quel homme, quel ange, néan-
“moins! MON AMI, je trouve que j'aime tant la
“République, qu'il me faut renoncer ma langue
“et écrire seulement le langage de la République
“de France—langage des Dieux et des Anges—
“langage, en un mot, des Français! Hier au soir
“je rencontraï à l'Athenæum Monsieur Mack Leese,
“qui me dit que MM. les Commissionnaires des
“Beaux Arts lui avaient écrit, par leur secrétaire,
“un billet de remerciements à propos de son
“tableau dans la Chambre des Députés, et qu'ils
“lui avaient prié de faire l'autre tableau en fres-
“que, dont on y a besoin. Ce qu'il a promis.
“Voici des nouvelles pour les champs de Lin-
“coln's Inn! Vive la gloire de France! Vive la
“République! Vive le Peuple! Plus de Royauté!
“Plus des Bourbons! Plus de Guizot! Mort aux
“traîtres! Faisons couler le sang pour la liberté,
“la justice, la cause populaire! Jusqu'à cinq heures
“et demie, adieu, mon brave! Recevez l'assurance
“de ma considération distinguée, et croyez-moi,
“CONCITOYEN! votre tout dévoué, CITOYEN CHARLES
“DICKENS.” I proved to be not quite so wrong,
nevertheless, as my friend supposed.

Aspirations of
Citizen
Dickens.

Somewhat earlier than usual this summer, on the close of the Shakespeare-house performances, he tried Broadstairs once more, having no important writing in hand: but in the brief interval before leaving he saw a thing of celebrity in those days, the Chinese Junk; and I had all the details in so good a description that I could not resist the temptation of using some parts of it at the time. "Drive down to the Blackwall railway," he wrote to me, "and for a matter of eighteen-pence you are at the Chinese Empire in no time. In half a score of minutes, the tiles and "chimney-pots, backs of squalid houses, frowsy "pieces of waste ground, narrow courts and streets, "swamps, ditches, masts of ships, gardens of dock- "weed, and unwholesome little bowers of scarlet "beans, whirl away in a flying dream, and nothing "is left but China. How the flowery region ever came into this latitude and longitude is the first "thing one asks; and it is not certainly the least "of the marvel. As Aladdin's palace was transported hither and thither by the rubbing of a "lamp, so the crew of Chinamen aboard the Key- "ing devoutly believed that their good ship would "turn up, quite safe, at the desired port, if they "only tied red rags enough upon the mast, rudder, and cable. Somehow they did not succeed. Perhaps they ran short of rag; at any rate they "hadn't enough on board to keep them above "water; and to the bottom they would undoubtedly have gone but for the skill and coolness of "a dozen English sailors, who brought them over

BROAD-
STAIRS.
1848.

At BROAD-
STAIRS.

By rail to
China.

The Junk.

How it came
over.

BROAD-STAIRS:
1848.
Chinese Junk.

What it was
like.

Mariners on
deck.

In the cabin.

"the ocean in safety. Well, if there be any one
"thing in the world that this extraordinary craft
"is not at all like, that thing is a ship of any
"kind. So narrow, so long, so grotesque; so low
"in the middle, so high at each end, like a China
"pen-tray; with no rigging, with nowhere to go
"to aloft; with mats for sails, great warped cigars
"for masts, gaudy dragons and sea-monsters dis-
"porting themselves from stem to stern, and *on*
"the stern a gigantic cock of impossible aspect,
"defying the world (as well he may) to produce
"his equal,—it would look more at home at the
"top of a public building, or at the top of a
"mountain, or in an avenue of trees, or down in
"a mine, than afloat on the water. As for the
"Chinese lounging on the deck, the most extra-
"vagant imagination would never dare to suppose
"them to be mariners. Imagine a ship's crew,
"without a profile among them, in gauze pin-
"afores and plaited hair; wearing stiff clogs a
"quarter of a foot thick in the sole; and lying at
"night in little scented boxes, like backgammon
"men or chess-pieces, or mother-of-pearl counters!
"But by Jove! even this is nothing to your sur-
"prise when you go down into the cabin. There
"you get into a torture of perplexity. As, what
"became of all those lanterns hanging to the roof
"when the Junk was out at sea? Whether they
"dangled there, banging and beating against each
"other, like so many jesters' baubles? Whether
"the idol Chin Tee, of the eighteen arms, en-
"shrined in a celestial Punch's Show, in the place

"of honour, ever tumbled out in heavy weather?
 "Whether the incense and the joss-stick still burnt
 "before her, with a faint perfume and a little
 "thread of smoke, while the mighty waves were
 "roaring all around? Whether that preposterous
 "tissue-paper umbrella in the corner was always
 "spread, as being a convenient maritime instru-
 "ment for walking about the decks with in a
 "storm? Whether all the cool and shiny little
 "chairs and tables were continually sliding about
 "and bruising each other, and if not why not?
 "Whether anybody on the voyage ever read those
 "two books printed in characters like bird-cages
 "and fly-traps? Whether the Mandarin passenger,
 "He Sing, who had never been ten miles from
 "home in his life before, lying sick on a bamboo
 "couch in a private china closet of his own
 "(where he is now perpetually writing autographs
 "for inquisitive barbarians), ever began to doubt
 "the potency of the Goddess of the Sea, whose
 "counterfeit presentment, like a flowery monthly
 "nurse, occupies the sailors' joss-house in the
 "second gallery? Whether it is possible that the
 "said Mandarin, or the artist of the ship, Sam
 "Sing, Esquire, R.A. of Canton, *can* ever go ashore
 "without a walking-staff of cinnamon, agreeably
 "to the usage of their likenesses in British tea-
 "shops? Above all, whether the hoarse old ocean
 "could ever have been seriously in earnest with
 "this floating toy-shop; or had merely played with
 "it in lightness of spirit—roughly, but meaning
 "no harm—as the bull did with another kind of

BROAD-
 STAIRS:
 1818.

Chinese Junk.

Perplexing
 questions.

A toy-shop on
 the seas.

BROAD-
STAIRS;
1848.

Chinese Junk.

Type of
Finality.

A contrast.

"china-shop on St. Patrick's day in the morn-
"ing."

The reply made on this brought back comment and sequel not less amusing. "Yes, there
"can be no question that this is Finality in per-
"fection; and it is a great advantage to have the
"doctrine so beautifully worked out, and shut up
"in a corner of a dock near a fashionable white-
"bait house for the edification of man. Thousands
"of years have passed away since the first junk
"was built on this model, and the last junk ever
"launched was no better for that waste and desert
"of time. The mimic eye painted on their prows
"to assist them in finding their way, has opened
"as wide and seen as far as any actual organ of
"sight in all the interval through the whole im-
"mense extent of that strange country. It has
"been set in the flowery head to as little purpose
"for thousands of years. With all their patient
"and ingenious but never advancing art, and with
"all their rich and diligent agricultural cultiva-
"tion, not a new twist or curve has been given
"to a ball of ivory, and not a blade of experience
"has been grown. There is a genuine finality in
"that; and when one comes from behind the
"wooden screen that encloses the curious sight,
"to look again upon the river and the mighty
"signs on its banks of life, enterprise, and pro-
"gress, the question that comes nearest is beyond
"doubt a home one. Whether *we* ever by any
"chance, in storms, trust to red rags; or burn
"joss-sticks before idols; or grope our way by

"the help of conventional eyes that have no sight in them; or sacrifice substantial facts for absurd forms? The ignorant crew of the Keying refused to enter on the ships' books, until 'a considerable amount of silvered-paper, tin-foil, and joss-stick' had been laid in by the owners for the purposes of their worship. And I wonder whether *our* seamen, let alone our bishops and deacons, ever stand out upon points of silvered-paper and tin-foil and joss-sticks. To be sure Christianity is not Chin-Teeism, and that I suppose is why we never lose sight of the end in contemptible and insignificant quarrels about the means. There is enough matter for reflection aboard the Keying at any rate to last one's voyage home to England again."

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1818.

Home
questions.

Other letters of the summer from Broadstairs *Ante*, p. 155-6. will complete what he wrote from the same place last year on Mr. Cruikshank's efforts in the cause of temperance, and will enable me to say, what I know he wished to be remembered in this story, that there was no subject on which through his whole life he felt more strongly than this. No man advocated temperance, even as far as possible its legislative enforcement, with greater earnestness; but he made important reservations. Not thinking drunkenness to be a vice inborn, or incident to the poor more than to other people, he never would agree that the existence of a gin-shop was the alpha and omega of it. Believing it to be *the* "national horror," he also believed that many operative causes had to do with having

C. D.'s view
of temperance
agitation.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Temptations
to gin-shop.

Necessity of
dealing with
them.

Stages
anterior to
drunkenness.

made it so; and his objection to the temperance agitation was that these were left out of account altogether. He thought the gin-shop not fairly to be rendered the exclusive object of attack, until, in connection with the classes who mostly made it their resort, the temptations that led to it, physical and moral, should have been more bravely dealt with. Among the former he counted foul smells, disgusting habitations, bad workshops and workshop-customs, scarcity of light, air, and water, in short the absence of all easy means of decency and health; and among the latter, the mental weariness and languor so induced, the desire of wholesome relaxation, the craving for *some* stimulus and excitement, not less needful than the sun itself to lives so passed, and last, and inclusive of all the rest, ignorance, and the want of rational mental training, generally applied. This was consistently Dickens's "platform" throughout the years he was known to me; and holding it to be within the reach as well as the scope of legislation, which even our political magnates have been discovering lately, he thought intemperance to be but the one result that, out of all of those arising from the absence of legislation, was the most wretched. For him, drunkenness had a teeming and reproachful history anterior to the drunken stage; and he thought it the first duty of the moralist bent upon annihilating the gin-shop, to "strike deep and spare not" at those previous remediable evils. Certainly this was not the way of Mr. Cruikshank,

any more than it is that of the many excellent people who take part in temperance agitations. His former tale of the *Bottle*, as told by his admirable pencil, was that of a decent working man, father of a boy and a girl, living in comfort and good esteem until near the middle age, when, happening unluckily to have a goose for dinner one day in the bosom of his thriving family, he jocularly sends out for a bottle of gin, persuades his wife, until then a picture of neatness and good housewifery, to take a little drop after the stuffing, and the whole family from that moment drink themselves to destruction. The sequel, of which Dickens now wrote to me, traced the lives of the boy and girl after the wretched deaths of their drunken parents, through gin-shop, beer-shop, and dancing-rooms, up to their trial for robbery; when the boy is convicted, dying aboard the hulks; and the girl, desolate and mad after her acquittal, flings herself from London-bridge into the night-darkened river.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.
Cruikshank's
Bottle:

and D.unk-
ard's *Children*.

"I think," said Dickens, "the power of that closing scene quite extraordinary. It haunts the remembrance like an awful reality. It is full of passion and terror, and I doubt very much whether any hand but his could so have rendered it. There are other fine things too. The death-bed scene on board the hulks; the convict who is composing the face, and the other who is drawing the screen round the bed's head; seem to me masterpieces worthy of the greatest painter. The reality of the place, and the fidelity with

C. D.'s
opinion.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Realities of
Cruikshank's
pencil.

Its one-
sidedness.

The Hogarth
method.

"which every minute object illustrative of it is presented, are surprising. I think myself no bad judge of this feature, and it is remarkable throughout. In the trial scene at the Old Bailey, the eye may wander round the Court, and observe everything that is a part of the place. The very light and atmosphere are faithfully reproduced. So, in the gin-shop and the beer-shop. An inferior hand would indicate a fragment of the fact, and slur it over; but here every shred is honestly made out. The man behind the bar in the gin-shop, is as real as the convicts at the hulks, or the barristers round the table in the Old Bailey. I found it quite curious, as I closed the book, to recall the number of faces I had seen of individual identity, and to think what a chance they have of living, as the Spanish friar said to Wilkie, when the living have passed away. But it only makes more exasperating to me the obstinate one-sidedness of the thing. When a man shows so forcibly the side of the medal on which the people in their faults and crimes are stamped, he is the more bound to help us to a glance at that other side on which the faults and vices of the governments placed over the people are not less gravely impressed."

This led to some remark on Hogarth's method in such matters, and I am glad to be able to preserve this fine criticism of that great Englishman, by a writer who closely resembled him in genius; as another generation will be probably

more apt than our own to discover. "Hogarth
"avoided the Drunkard's Progress, I conceive,
"precisely because the causes of drunkenness
"among the poor were so numerous and widely
"spread, and lurked so sorrowfully deep and far
"down in all human misery, neglect, and despair,
"that even *his* pencil could not bring them fairly
"and justly into the light. It was never his plan
"to be content with only showing the effect. In
"the death of the miser-father, his shoe new-soled
"with the binding of his bible, before the young
"Rake begins his career; in the worldly father,
"listless daughter, impoverished young lord, and
"crafty lawyer, of the first plate of Marriage-à-la
"mode; in the detestable advances through the
"stages of Cruelty; and in the progress downward
"of Thomas Idle; you see the effects indeed, but
"also the causes. He was never disposed to spare
"the kind of drunkenness that was of more
"respectable' engenderment, as one sees in his
"midnight modern conversation, the election
"plates, and crowds of stupid aldermen and other
"guzzlers. But after one immortal journey down
"Gin-lane, he turned away in pity and sorrow—
"perhaps in hope of better things, one day, from
"better laws and schools and poor men's homes
"—and went back no more. The scene of Gin-
"lane, you know, is that just cleared away for the
"extension of Oxford-street, which we were look-
"ing at the other day; and I think it a remarkable
"trait of Hogarth's picture, that, while it exhibits
"drunkenness in the most appalling forms, it also

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Dickens on
Hogarth.

Cause as well
as effect.

Exit of Gin-
lane.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Dickens on
Hogarth.

Wisdom of
the great
painter.

Late, but
never too late.

"forces on attention a most neglected wretched
"neighbourhood, and an unwholesome, indecent,
"abject condition of life that might be put as
"frontispiece to our sanitary report of a hundred
"years later date. I have always myself thought
"the purpose of this fine piece to be not ad-
"equately stated even by CHARLES LAMB. 'The
"very houses seem absolutely reeling' it is true;
"but beside that wonderful picture of what follows
"intoxication, we have indication quite as power-
"ful of what leads to it among the neglected
"classes. There is no evidence that any of the
"actors in the dreary scene have ever been much
"better than we see them there. The best are
"pawning the commonest necessities, and tools
"of their trades; and the worst are homeless
"vagrants who give us no clue to their having
"been otherwise in bygone days. All are living
"and dying miserably. Nobody is interfering for
"prevention or for cure, in the generation going
"out before us, or the generation coming in. The
"beadle is the only sober man in the composition
"except the pawnbroker, and he is mightily in-
"different to the orphan-child crying beside its
"parent's coffin. The little charity-girls are not
"so well taught or looked after, but that they can
"take to dram-drinking already. The church in-
"deed is very prominent and handsome; but as,
"quite passive in the picture, it coldly surveys
"these things in progress under shadow of its
"tower, I cannot but bethink me that it was not
"until this year of grace 1848 that a Bishop of

"London first came out respecting something wrong in poor men's social accommodations, and I am confirmed in my suspicion that Hogarth had many meanings which have not grown obsolete in a century."

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Another art-criticism by Dickens should be added. Upon a separate publication by Leech of some drawings on stone called the Rising Generation, from designs done for Mr. Punch's gallery, he wrote at my request a little essay of which a few sentences will find appropriate place with his letter on the other great caricaturist of his time. I use that word, as he did, only for want of a better. Dickens was of opinion that, in this particular line of illustration, while he conceded all his fame to the elder and stronger contemporary, Mr. Leech was the very first Englishman who had made Beauty a part of his art; and he held, that, by striking out this course, and setting the successful example of introducing always into his most whimsical pieces some beautiful faces or agreeable forms, he had done more than any other man of his generation to refine a branch of art to which the facilities of steam-printing and wood-engraving were giving almost unrivalled diffusion and popularity. His opinion of Leech in a word was that he turned caricature into character; and would leave behind him not a little of the history of his time and its follies, sketched with inimitable grace.

Dickens on
designs by
Leech.

Originality of
Leech.

"If we turn back to a collection of the works of Rowlandson or Gilray, we shall find, in spite

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Dickens on
designs by
Leech.

Ugliness or
beauty?

Superiority of
his method.

"of the great humour displayed in many of them,
"that they are rendered wearisome and unpleasant
"by a vast amount of personal ugliness. Now,
"besides that it is a poor device to represent
"what is satirized as being necessarily ugly, which
"is but the resource of an angry child or a
"jealous woman, it serves no purpose but to pro-
"duce a disagreeable result. There is no reason
"why the farmer's daughter in the old caricature
"who is squalling at the harpsichord (to the
"intense delight, by the bye, of her worthy father,
"whom it is her duty to please) should be squab
"and hideous. The satire on the manner of her
"education, if there be any in the thing at all,
"would be just as good, if she were pretty. Mr.
"Leech would have made her so. The average
"of farmers' daughters in England are not im-
"possible lumps of fat. One is quite as likely to
"find a pretty girl in a farm-house, as to find an
"ugly one; and we think, with Mr. Leech, that
"the business of this style of art is with the pretty
"one. She is not only a pleasanter object, but
"we have more interest in her. We care more
"about what does become her, and does not be-
"come her. Mr. Leech represented the other day
"certain delicate creatures with bewitching coun-
"tenances encased in several varieties of that
"amazing garment, the ladies' paletot. Formerly
"those fair creatures would have been made as
"ugly and ungainly as possible, and then the
"point would have been lost. The spectator, with
"a laugh at the absurdity of the whole group,

"would not have cared how such uncouth creatures
 "disguised themselves, or how ridiculous they be-
 "came. . . . But to represent female beauty as
 "Mr. Leech represents it, an artist must have a
 "most delicate perception of it; and the gift of
 "being able to realise it to us with two or three
 "slight, sure touches of his pencil. This power
 "Mr. Leech possesses, in an extraordinary degree.
 ". . . For this reason, we enter our protest against
 "those of the Rising Generation who are pre-
 "cociously in love being made the subject of
 "merriment by a pitiless and unsympathizing world.
 "We never saw a boy more distinctly in the right
 "than the young gentleman kneeling on the chair
 "to beg a lock of hair from his pretty cousin, to
 "take back to school. Madness is in her apron,
 "and Virgil dog's-eared and defaced is in her
 "ringlets. Doubts may suggest themselves of the
 "perfect disinterestedness of the other young
 "gentleman contemplating the fair girl at the
 "piano—doubts engendered by his worldly al-
 "lusion to 'tin'; though even that may have arisen
 "in his modest consciousness of his own inability
 "to support an establishment—but that he should
 "be 'deucedly inclined to go and cut that fellow
 "'out,' appears to us one of the most natural
 "emotions of the human breast. The young gen-
 "tleman with the dishevelled hair and clasped
 "hands who loves the transcendant beauty with
 "the bouquet, and can't be happy without her, is
 "to us a withering and desolate spectacle. Who
 "*could* be happy without her? . . . The growing

BROAD-
 STAIRS:
 1848:

Dickens on
 designs by
 Leech.
 The requi-
 sites for it.

Excuses for
 the rising
 generation.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Dickens on
designs by
Leech.

Intellectual
juvenility.

A dangerous
youth.

"youths are not less happily observed and agree-
ably depicted than the grown women. The
"languid little creature who 'hasn't danced since
"he was quite a boy,' is perfect; and the eager-
ness of the small dancer whom he declines to
"receive for a partner at the hands of the glorious
"old lady of the house (the little feet quite ready
"for the first position, the whole heart projected
"into the quadrille, and the glance peeping timidly
"at the desired one out of a flutter of hope and
"doubt) is quite delightful to look at. The in-
tellectual juvenile who awakens the tremendous
"wrath of a Norma of private life by considering
"woman an inferior animal, is lecturing at the
"present moment, we understand, on the Concrete
"in connexion with the Will. The legs of the
"young philosopher who considers Shakespeare
"an over-rated man, were seen by us dangling
"over the side of an omnibus last Tuesday. We
"have no acquaintance with the scowling young
"gentleman who is clear that 'if his Governor
"don't like the way he goes on in, why he must
"have chambers and so much a week;' but if he
"is not by this time in Van Diemen's-land, he
"will certainly go to it through Newgate. We
"should exceedingly dislike to have personal pro-
perty in a strong box, to live in the suburb of
"Camberwell, and to be in the relation of bachelor-
uncle to that youth . . . In all his designs, what-
ever Mr. Leech desires to do, he does. His
"drawing seems to us charming; and the expres-
sion indicated, though by the simplest means, is

"exactly the natural expression, and is recognised
 "as such immediately. Some forms of our existing
 "life will never have a better chronicler. His wit
 "is good-natured, and always the wit of a gentle-
 "man. He has a becoming sense of responsibility
 "and self-restraint; he delights in agreeable things;
 "he imparts some pleasant air of his own to
 "things not pleasant in themselves; he is sug-
 "gestive and full of matter; and he is always im-
 "proving. Into the tone as well as into the exe-
 "cution of what he does, he has brought a certain
 "elegance which is altogether new, without in-
 "volving any compromise of what is true. Popular
 "art in England has not had so rich an acquisi-
 "tion." Dickens's closing allusion was to a re-
 mark made by Mr. Ford in a review of *Oliver*
Twist formerly referred to. "It is eight or ten
 "years since a writer in the *Quarterly Review*,
 "making mention of MR. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK,
 "commented on the absurdity of excluding such
 "a man from the Royal Academy, because his
 "works were not produced in certain materials,
 "and did not occupy a certain space in its an-
 "nual shows. Will no Associates be found upon
 "its books one of these days, the labours of
 "whose oil and brushes will have sunk into the
 "profoundest obscurity, when many pencil-marks
 "of MR. CRUIKSHANK and of MR. LEECH will be
 "still fresh in half the houses in the land?"

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

Dickens on
designs by
Leech.

What Leech
will be re-
membered
for.

Page 220 of
Vol. I.

Dickens on
Cruikshank
and Leech.

Of what otherwise occupied him at Broad-
stairs in 1848 there is not much to mention until
the close of his holiday. He used to say that he

BROAD-
STAIRS.
1848.

Odd ad-
ventures.
Page 233 of
Vol. III.

Pony-chaise
accident.

Fortunate
escape.

never went for more than a couple of days from his own home without something befalling him that never happened to anyone else, and his Broadstairs adventure of the present summer verged closer on tragedy than comedy. Returning there one day in August after bringing up his boys to school, it had been arranged that his wife should meet him at Margate; but he had walked impatiently far beyond the place for meeting when at last he caught sight of her, not in the small chaise but in a large carriage and pair followed by an excited crowd, and with the youth that should have been driving the little pony bruised and bandaged on the box behind the two prancing horses. "You may faintly imagine my amazement at encountering this carriage, and the strange people, and Kate, and the crowd, and the bandaged one, and all the rest of it." And then in a line or two I had the story. "At the top of a steep hill on the road, with a ditch on each side, the pony bolted, upon which what does John do but jump out! He says he was thrown out, but it cannot be. The reins immediately became entangled in the wheels, and away went the pony down the hill madly, with Kate inside rending the Isle of Thanet with her screams. The accident might have been a fearful one, if the pony had not, thank Heaven, on getting to the bottom, pitched over the side; breaking the shaft and cutting her hind legs, but in the most extraordinary manner smashing her own way apart. She tumbled down, a bundle

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

"of legs with her head tucked underneath, and
"left the chaise standing on the bank! A Captain
"Devaynes and his wife were passing in their
"carriage at the moment, saw the accident with
"no power of preventing it, got Kate out, laid
"her on the grass, and behaved with infinite
"kindness. All's well that ends well, and I think
"she's really none the worse for the fright. John
"is in bed a good deal bruised, but without any
"broken bone, and likely soon to come right;
"though for the present plastered all over, and,
"like Squeers, a brown-paper parcel chock-full of
"nothing but groans. The women generally have
"no sympathy for him whatever; and the nurse
"says, with indignation, how could he go and
"leave an unprotected female in the shay!"

Parallel to
Squeers.

Holiday incidents there were many, but none
that need detain us. This was really a summer
idleness: for it was the interval between two of
his important undertakings, there was no periodical
yet to make demands on him, and only the task
of finishing his *Haunted Man* for Christmas lay
ahead. But he did even his nothings in a
strenuous way, and on occasion could make gal-
lant fight against the elements themselves. He
reported himself, to my horror, thrice wet through
on a single day, "dressed four times," and find-
ing all sorts of great things, brought out by the
rains, among the rocks on the sea-beach. He
also sketched now and then morsels of character
for me, of which I will preserve one. "F is

Strenuous
Idleness.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1848.

French phil-
osophy.

Hint for Mr.
Taine.

Shadows of
work.

"philosophical, from sunrise to bedtime: chiefly
"in the French line, about French women going
"mad, and in that state coming to their hus-
"bands, and saying, 'Mon ami, je vous ai trompé.
"Voici les lettres de mon amant!' Whereupon
"the husbands take the letters and think them
"waste paper, and become extra-philosophical at
"finding that they really *were* the lover's effusions:
"though what there is of philosophy in it all, or
"anything but unwholesomeness, it is not easy to
"see." (A remark that it might not be out of
place to offer to Mr. Taine's notice.) "Likewise
"about dark shades coming over our wedded
"Emmeline's face at parties; and about F hand-
"ing her to her carriage, and saying, 'May I
"come in, for a lift homeward?' and she bend-
"ing over him out of window, and saying in a
"low voice, I DARE NOT! And then of the carriage
"driving away like lightning, leaving F more
"philosophical than ever on the pavement." Not
till the close of September I heard of work in-
truding itself, in a letter twitting me for a broken
promise in not joining him: "We are reasonably
"jolly, but rurally so; going to bed o' nights at
"ten, and bathing o' mornings at half-past seven;
"and not drugging ourselves with those dirty and
"spoiled waters of Lethe that flow round the base
"of the great pyramid." Then, after mention of
the friends who had left him, Sheriff Gordon, the
Leeches, Lemon, Egg and Stone: "reflection and
"pensiveness are coming. I have NOT

“—seen Fancy write
 “With a pencil of light
 “On the blotter so solid, commanding the sea!

BROAD-
 STAIRS:
 1848.

“but I shouldn’t wonder if she were to do it, one
 “of these days. Dim visions of divers things are Better for his
 idleness.
 “floating around me; and I must go to work,
 “head foremost, when I get home. I am glad,
 “after all, that I have not been at it here; for I
 “am all the better for my idleness, no doubt. . .
 “Roche was very ill last night, and looks like one
 “with his face turned to the other world, this
 “morning. When *are* you coming? Oh what
 “days and nights there have been here, this week
 “past!” My consent to a suggestion in his next
 letter, that I should meet him on his way back,
 and join him in a walking-excursion home, got
 me full absolution for broken promises; and the
 way we took will remind friends of his later life,
 when he was lord of Gadshill, of an object of
 interest which he delighted in taking them to
 see. “You will come down booked for Maid-
 “stone (I will meet you at Paddock-wood), and
 “we will go thither in company over a most
 “beautiful little line of railroad. The eight miles
 “walk from Maidstone to Rochester, and the A favourite
 spot.
 “visit to the Druidical altar on the wayside, are
 “charming.” This could be accomplished on the
 “Tuesday; and Wednesday we might look about
 “us at Chatham, coming home by Cobham on
 “Thursday. . . .”

His first sea-side holiday in 1849 was at

BRIGHTON:
1849.

Brighton, where he passed some weeks in February; and not, I am bound to add, without the usual *unusual* adventure to signalize his visit. He had not been a week in his lodgings, where Leech and his wife joined him, when both his landlord and the daughter of his landlord went raving mad, and the lodgers were driven away to the Bedford hotel. "If you could have heard "the cursing and crying of the two; could have "seen the physician and nurse quoited out into "the passage by the madman at the hazard of "their lives; could have seen Leech and me fly- "ing to the doctor's rescue; could have seen our "wives pulling us back; could have seen the "M.D. faint with fear; could have seen three "other MD.'s come to his aid; with an atmo- "sphere of Mrs. Gamps, strait-waistcoats, strug- "gling friends and servants, surrounding the "whole; you would have said it was quite worthy "of me, and quite in keeping with my usual pro- "ceedings." The letter ended with a word on what then his thoughts were full of, but for which no name had yet been found. "A sea-fog "to-day, but yesterday inexpressibly delicious. My "mind running, like a high sea, on names—not "satisfied yet, though." When he next wrote from the sea-side, in the beginning of July, he had found the name; had started his book; and was "rushing to Broadstairs" to write the fourth number of *David Copperfield*.

With mad
people and
mad doctors.

A name for
his new book.

At BROAD-
STAIRS.

In this came the childish experiences which had left so deep an impression upon him, and

over which he had some difficulty in throwing the needful disguises. "Fourteen miles to-day "in the country," he had written to me on the 21st of June, "revolving number four!" Still he did not quite see his way. Three days later he wrote: "On leaving you last night, I found my- "self summoned on a special jury in the Queen's "Bench to-day. I have taken no notice of the "document,* and hourly expect to be dragged "forth to a dungeon for contempt of court. I "think I should rather like it. It might help me "with a new notion or two in my difficulties. "Meanwhile I shall take a stroll to-night in the "green fields from 7 to 10, if you feel inclined "to join." His troubles ended when he got to Broadstairs, from which he wrote on the tenth of July to tell me that agreeably to the plan we had discussed he had introduced a great part of his MS. into the number. "I really think I have "done it ingeniously, and with a very com- "plicated interweaving of truth and fiction. Vous "verrez. I am getting on like a house afire in

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1849.

Revolving
No. four.

Summoned as
special juror.

End of
trouble with
No. four.

* My friend Mr. Shirley Brooks sends me a "charac- "teristic" cutting from an autograph catalogue in which these few lines are given from an early letter in the Doughty-street days. "I always pay my taxes when they "won't call any longer, in order to get a bad name in the "parish and so escape all honours." It is a touch of char- acter, certainly; but though his motive in later life was the same, his method was not. He attended to the tax-col- lector, but of any other parochial or political application took no notice whatever.

A Doughty-
street letter.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1849.

"point of health, and ditto ditto in point of
"number."

In the middle of July the number was nearly done, and he was still doubtful where to pass his longer summer holiday. Leech wished to join him in it, and both desired a change from Broadstairs. At first he thought of Folkestone,* but

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Vol. I.

A male Mrs.
Gamp and
Mrs. Harris.

* Even in the modest retirement of a note I fear that I shall offend the dignity of history, and of biography, by printing the lines in which this intention was announced to me. They were written "in character;" and the character was that of the "waterman" at the Charing-cross cabstand, first discovered by George Cattermole, whose imitations of him were a delight to Dickens at this time, and adapted themselves in the exuberance of his admiration to every conceivable variety of subject. The painter of the Derby Day will have a fullness of satisfaction in remembering this. "Sloppy," the hero in question, had a friend "Jack" in whom he was supposed to typify his own early and hard experiences before he became a convert to temperance; and Dickens used to point to "Jack" as the justification of himself and Mrs. Gamp for their portentous invention of Mrs. Harris. It is amazing nonsense to repeat; but to hear Cattermole, in the gruff hoarse accents of what seemed to be the remains of a deep bass voice wrapped up in wet straw, repeat the wild proceedings of Jack, was not to be forgotten. "Yes sir, Jack went mad sir, just afore he 'stablished hisself 'by Sir Robert Peel's-s-s, sir. He was allis a callin' for a 'pint o' beer sir, and they brings him water sir. Yes sir. 'And so sir, I sees him dodgin' about one day sir, yes sir, 'and at last he gits a hopportunity sir and claps a pitch-plaster on the mouth o' th' pump sir, and says he's done 'for his wust henemy sir. Yes sir. And then they finds him 'a-sittin' on the top o' the corn-chest sir, yes sir, a crammin'

disappointment there led to a sudden change. "I propose" (15th of July) "returning to town to-

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1849.

"a old pistol with wisps o' hay and horse-beans sir, and "swearin' he's a goin' to blow hisself to hattoms, yes sir, but "he doesn't, no sir. For I sees him arterwards a lyin' on "the straw a maniffacktrin' Bengal cheroots out o' corn-chaff "sir and swearin' he'd make 'em smoke sir, but they hul- "loxed him off round by the corner of Drummins's-s-s-s-s "sir, just afore I come here sir, yes sir. And so you never "see'd us together sir, no sir." This was the remarkable dialect in which Dickens wrote from Broadstairs on the 13th of July. "About Saturday sir?—Why sir, I'm a- "going to *Folkestone* a Saturday sir!—not on accounts of the "maniffacktring of Bengal cheroots as there is there but for "the survayin' o' the coast sir. 'Cos you see sir, bein' here "sir, and not a finishin' my work sir till to-morrow sir, I "couldn't go afore! And if I wos to come home, and not "go, and come back agin sir, wy it would be nat'rally a "hulloxin' of myself sir. Yes sir. Wy sir, I b'lieve that "the gent as is a goin' to 'stablish hisself sir, in the autumn, "along with me round the corner sir (by Drummins's-s-s-s-s "bank) is a comin' down to *Folkestone* Saturday arternoon "—Leech by name sir—yes sir—another Jack sir—and if "you wos to come down along with him sir by the train as "gits to *Folkestone* twenty minutes arter five, you'd find me "a smoking a Bengal cheroot (made of clover-chaff and "horse-beans sir) on the platform. You couldn't spend "your arternoon better sir. *Dover*, *Sandgate*, *Herne Bay*— "they're all to be wisited sir, most probable, till sich times "as a 'ouse is found sir. Yes sir. Then decide to come sir, "and say you will, and do it. I shall be here till arter post "time Saturday mornin' sir. Come on then!

Letter from
G. D. in
character.

SLOPPY

"His X mark."

BONCHURCH:
1849.

"morrow by the boat from Ramsgate, and going
"off to Weymouth or the Isle of Wight, or both,
"early the next morning." A few days after, his
choice was made.

James White.

He had taken a house at Bonchurch, attracted there by the friend who had made it a place of interest for him during the last few years, the Reverend James White, with whose name and its associations my mind connects inseparably many of Dickens's happiest hours. To pay him fitting tribute would not be easy, if here it were called for. In the kindly shrewd Scotch face, a keen sensitiveness to pleasure and pain was the first thing that struck any common observer. Cheerfulness and gloom coursed over it so rapidly that no one could question the tale they told. But the relish of his life had outlived its more than usual share of sorrows; and quaint sly humour, love of jest and merriment, capital knowledge of books, and sagacious quips at men, made his companionship delightful. Like his life, his genius was made up of alternations of mirth and melancholy. He would be immersed, at one time, in those darkest Scottish annals from which he drew his tragedies; and overflowing, at another, into Sir Frizzle Pumpkin's exuberant farce. The tragic histories may probably perish with the actor's perishable art; but three little abstracts of history written at a later time in prose, with a sunny clearness of narration and a glow of picturesque interest to my knowledge unequalled in books of such small pretension, will find, I hope,

Mirth and
melancholy.

*Landmarks of
History; and
Eighteen
Christian
Centuries.*

a lasting place in literature. They are filled with felicities of phrase, with breadth of understanding and judgment, with manful honesty, quiet sagacity, and a constant cheerful piety, valuable for all and priceless for the young. Another word I permit myself to add. With Dickens, White was popular supremely for his eager good fellowship; and few men brought him more of what he always liked to receive. But he brought nothing so good as his wife. "He is excellent, "but she is better," is the pithy remark of his first Bonchurch letter; and the true affection and respect that followed is happily still borne her by his daughters.

BONCHURCH:
1849.

Mrs. James
White.

Of course there is something strange to be recorded of the Bonchurch holiday, but it does not come till nearer the ending; and, with more attention to Mrs. Malaprop's advice to begin with a little aversion, might probably not have come at all. He began with an excess of liking. Of the Undercliff he was full of admiration. "From "the top of the highest downs," he wrote in his second letter (28th of July) "there are views "which are only to be equalled on the Genoese "shore of the Mediterranean; the variety of "walks is extraordinary; things are cheap, and "everybody is civil. The waterfall acts wonder- "fully, and the sea bathing is delicious. Best of "all, the place is certainly cold rather than hot, "in the summer time. The evenings have been "even chilly. White very jovial, and emulous of "the inimitable in respect of gin-punch. He

First impres-
sions of the
Undercliff.

White's
punch.

BONCHURCH:
1849.

Talfourd
made a judge.

Dickens's
affection for
him.

"had made some for our arrival. Ha! ha! not
"bad for a beginner . . . I have been, and am,
"trying to work this morning; but I can't make
"anything of it, and am going out to think. I
"am invited by a distinguished friend to dine
"with you on the first of August, but I have
"pleaded distance and the being resident in a
"cave on the sea shore; my food, beans; my
"drink, the water from the rock . . . I must pluck
"up heart of grace to write to Jeffrey, of whom
"I had but poor accounts from Gordon just before
"leaving. Talfourd delightful, and amuses me
"mightily. I am really quite enraptured at his
"success, and think of his happiness with uncom-
"mon pleasure." Our friend was now on the
bench; which he adorned with qualities that are
justly the pride of that profession, and with ac-
complishments that have become more rare in its
highest places than they were in former times.
His elevation only made those virtues better
known. Talfourd assumed nothing with the
ermine but the privilege of more frequent inter-
course with the tastes and friends he loved, and
he continued to be the most joyous and least
affected of companions. Such small oddities or
foibles as he had made him secretly only dearer
to Dickens, who had no friend he was more
attached to; and the many happy nights made
happier by the voice so affluent in generous
words, and the face so bright with ardent sensi-
bility, come back to me sorrowfully now. "Deaf
"the prais'd ear, and mute the tuneful tongue."

The poet's line has a double application and sadness. BONCHURCH:
1849.

He wrote again on the first of August. "I have just begun to get into work. We are expecting the Queen to come by very soon, in grand array, and are going to let off ever so many guns. I had a letter from Jeffrey yesterday morning, just as I was going to write to him. He has evidently been very ill, and I begin to have fears for his recovery. It is a very pathetic letter, as to his state of mind; but only in a tranquil contemplation of death, which I think very noble." His next letter, four days later, described himself as continuing still at work; but also taking part in dinners at Blackgang, and picnics of "tremendous success" on Shanklin Down. "Two charity sermons for the school are preached to-day, and I go to the afternoon one. The examination of said school to'other day was very funny. All the boys made Buckstone's bow in the *Rough Diamond*, and some in a very wonderful manner recited pieces of poetry, about a clock, and may we be like the clock, which is always a going and a doing of its duty, and always tells the truth (supposing it to be a slap-up chronometer I presume, for the American clock in the school was lying frightfully at that moment); and after being bothered to death by the multiplication table, they were refreshed with a public tea in Lady Jane Swinburne's garden." (There was a reference in one of his letters, but I have lost it, to a

Touching
letter from
Jeffrey.

Church-
school
examination.

Doubtful
example.

BONCHURCH:
1849.

Dinners and
picnics.

A conjuring
performance.

The come-
dian Regnier.

When acting
is genuine.

golden-haired lad of the Swinburnes whom his own boys used to play with, since become more widely known.) "The rain came in with the "first tea-pot, and has been active ever since. "On Friday we had a grand, and what is better, "a very good dinner at 'parson' Fielden's, with "some choice port. On Tuesday we are going "on another picnic; with the materials for a fire, "at my express stipulation; and a great iron pot "to boil potatoes in. These things, and the eat- "ables, go to the ground in a cart. Last night "we had some very good merriment at White's, "where pleasant Julian Young and his wife (who "are staying about five miles off) showed some "droll new games"—and roused the ambition in my friend to give a "mighty conjuring perform- "ance for all the children in Bonchurch," for which I sent him the materials and which went off in a tumult of wild delight. To the familiar names in this letter I will add one more, griev- ing freshly even now to connect it with suffering. "A letter from Poole has reached me since I "began this letter, with tidings in it that you will "be very sorry to hear. Poor Regnier has lost "his only child; the pretty daughter who dined "with us that nice day at your house, when we "all pleased the poor mother by admiring her so "much. She died of a sudden attack of malig- "nant typhus. Poole was at the funeral, and "writes that he never saw, or could have ima- "gined, such intensity of grief as Regnier's at "the grave. How one loves him for it. But is it

"not always true, in comedy and in tragedy, that BONCHURCH:
1849.
"the more real the man the more genuine the
"actor?"

After a few more days I heard of progress with his writing in spite of all festivities. 'I have "made it a rule that the inimitable is invisible," "until two every day. I shall have half the Progress in writing.
"number done, please God, to-morrow. I have "not worked quickly here yet, but I don't know "what I *may* do. Divers cogitations have occupied "my mind at intervals, respecting the dim design." The design was the weekly periodical so often in his thoughts, of which more will appear in my next chapter. His letter closed with intimations of discomfort in his health; of an obstinate cough; and of a determination he had formed to mount daily to the top of the downs. "It makes a great "difference in the climate to get a blow there and "come down again.' Then I heard of the doctor Doubts as to health.
"stethoscoping" him, of his hope that all was right in that quarter, and of rubbings "à la St. John Long" being ordered for his chest. But the mirth still went on. "There has been a Doctor "Lankester at Sandown, a very good merry fellow, "who has made one at the picnics, and whom I "went over and dined with, along with Danby (I "remember your liking for Danby, and don't "wonder at it), Leech, and White." A letter towards the close of August resumed yet more of his ordinary tone. "We had games and forfeits Personal news.
"last night at White's. Davy Roberts's pretty little "daughter is there for a week, with her husband,

BONCHURCH:
1849.

"Bicknell's son. There was a dinner first to say good-bye to Danby, who goes to other clergyman's-duty, and we were very merry. Mrs. White unchanging; White comically various in his moods. Talfourd comes down next Tuesday, and we think of going over to Ryde on Monday, visiting the play, sleeping there (I don't mean at the play), and bringing the Judge back. Browne is coming down when he has done his month's work. Should you like to go to Alum Bay while you are here? It would involve a night out, but I think would be very pleasant; and if you think so too, I will arrange it sub rosâ, so that we may not be, like Bobadil, 'oppressed by numbers.' I mean to take a fly over from Shanklin to meet you at Ryde; so that we can walk back from Shanklin over the landslip, where the scenery is wonderfully beautiful. Stone and Egg are coming next month, and we hope to see Jerrold before we go." Such notices from his letters may be thought hardly worth preserving; but a wonderful vitality in every circumstance, as long as life under any conditions remained to the writer, is the picture they contribute to; nor would it be complete without the addition, that fond as he was, in the intervals of his work, of this abundance and variety of enjoyments, to no man were so essential also those quieter hours of thought, and talk, not obtainable when "oppressed by numbers."

My proposed
visit.

Arrivals and
departures.

A startling
revelation.

My visit was due at the opening of September, but a few days earlier came the full revelation of

which only a passing shadow had reached in two or three previous letters. "Before I think of beginning my next number, I perhaps cannot do better than give you an imperfect description of the results of the climate of Bonchurch after a 'few weeks' residence. The first salubrious effect of which the Patient becomes conscious is an 'almost continual feeling of sickness, accompanied with great prostration of strength, so that his legs tremble under him, and his arms quiver when he wants to take hold of any object. An 'extraordinary disposition to sleep (except at night, when his rest, in the event of his having any, is 'broken by incessant dreams) is always present at the same time; and, if he have anything to do requiring thought and attention, this overpowers him to such a degree that he can only do it in 'snatches: lying down on beds in the fitful intervals. Extreme depression of mind, and a disposition to shed tears from morning to night, 'developes itself at the same period. If the Patient happen to have been a good walker, he finds ten miles an insupportable distance; in the achievement of which his legs are so unsteady, that he goes from side to side of the road, like a drunken man. If he happen to have ever possessed any energy of any kind, he finds it quenched in a dull, stupid languor. He has no purpose, power, or object in existence whatever. When he brushes his hair in the morning, he is so weak that he is obliged to sit upon a chair to do it. He is incapable of reading, at all

BONCHURCH:
1849.
Effect on C. D.
of Bonchurch
climate.

Utter prostration.

BONCHURCH: 1849. "times. And his bilious system is so utterly over-
 "thrown, that a ball of boiling fat appears to be
 "always behind the top of the bridge of his nose,
 "simmering between his haggard eyes. If he
 "should have caught a cold, he will find it im-
 "possible to get rid of it, as his system is wholly
 "incapable of making any effort. His cough will
 "be deep, monotonous, and constant. "The faith-
 "ful watch-dog's honest bark" will be nothing to
 "it. He will abandon all present idea of over-
 "coming it, and will content himself with keeping
 "an eye upon his blood-vessels to preserve them
 "whole and sound. *Patient's name, Inimitable B.*
 "... It's a mortal mistake!—That's the plain
 "fact. Of all the places I ever have been in, I
 "have never been in one so difficult to exist in,
 "pleasantly. Naples is hot and dirty, New York
 "feverish, Washington bilious, Genoa exciting,
 "Paris rainy—but Bonchurch, smashing. I am
 "quite convinced that I should die here, in a
 "year. It's not hot, it's not close, I don't know
 "what it is, but the prostration of it is *awful*.
 "Nobody here has the least idea what I think of
 "it; but I find, from all sorts of hints from Kate,
 "Georgina, and the Leeches, that they are all
 "affected more or less in the same way, and find
 "it very difficult to make head against. I make
 "no sign, and pretend not to know what is going
 "on. But they are right. I believe the Leeches
 "will go soon, and small blame to 'em!—For me,
 "when I leave here at the end of this September,
 "I must go down to some cold place; as Rams-

C. D. and the
Undercliff.

Difficulties
of existing
there.

Thinking of
Ramsgate.

"gate for example, for a week or two; or I seri-
 "ously believe I shall feel the effects of it for a
 "long time. . . . What do you think of *that*? . . .
 "The longer I live, the more I doubt the doctors.
 "I am perfectly convinced, that, for people suffer-
 "ing under a wasting disease, this Undercliff is
 "madness altogether. The doctors, with the old
 "miserable folly of looking at one bit of a sub-
 "ject, take the patient's lungs and the Under-
 "cliff's air, and settle solemnly that they are fit
 "for each other. But the whole influence of the
 "place, never taken into consideration, is to
 "reduce and overpower vitality. I am quite con-
 "fident that I should go down under it, as if it
 "were so much lead, slowly crushing me. An
 "American resident in Paris many years, who
 "brought me a letter from Olliffe, said, the day
 "before yesterday, that he had always had a pas-
 "sion for the sea never to be gratified enough,
 "but that after living here a month, he could not
 "bear to look at it; he couldn't endure the sound
 "of it; he didn't know how it was, but it seemed
 "associated with the decay of his whole powers."
 These were grave imputations against one of the
 prettiest places in England; but of the generally
 depressing influence of that Undercliff on par-
 ticular temperaments, I had already enough ex-
 perience to abate something of the surprise with
 which I read the letter. What it too bluntly puts
 aside are the sufferings other than his own, pro-
 tected and sheltered by what only aggravated his;
 but my visit gave me proof that he had really very

BONDURCH: 1849.

Distrust of doctors.

An American witness.

Other side of picture.

BONCHURCH: 1849. little overstated the effect upon himself. Making allowance, which sometimes he failed to do, for special peculiarities, and for the excitability never absent when he had in hand an undertaking such as *Copperfield*, I observed a nervous tendency to misgivings and apprehensions to the last degree unusual with him, which seemed to make the commonest things difficult; and though he stayed out his time, and brought away nothing that his happier associations with the place and its residents did not long survive, he never returned to Bonchurch.

What I observed at the time.

In the month that remained he completed his fifth number, and with the proof there came the reply to some questions of which I hardly remember more than that they referred to doubts of mine; one being as to the propriety of the kind of delusion he had first given to poor Mr. Dick,* which I thought a little too farcical for that really touching delineation of character. "Your suggestion is perfectly wise and sound," he wrote

Mr. Dick's original delusion.

From the *Copperfield*. MS.

* It stood originally thus: "'Do you recollect the date,' said Mr. Dick, looking earnestly at me, and taking up his pen to note it down, 'when that bull got into the china warehouse and did so much mischief?' I was very much surprised by the inquiry; but remembering a song about such an occurrence that was once popular at Salem House, and thinking he might want to quote it, replied that I believed it was on St. Patrick's Day. 'Yes, I know,' said Mr. Dick—'in the morning; but what year?' I could give no information on this point." Original MS. of *Copperfield*.

"back (22nd of August). "I have acted on it. I
"have also, instead of the bull and china-shop
"delusion, given Dick the idea, that, when the
"head of king Charles the First was cut off, some
"of the trouble was taken out of it, and put into
"his (Dick's)." When he next wrote, there was
news very welcome to me for the pleasure to
himself it involved. "Browne has sketched an
"uncommonly characteristic and capital Mr. Micaw-
"ber for the next number. I hope the present
"number is a good one. I hear nothing but
"pleasant accounts of the general satisfaction."
The same letter told me of an intention to go to
Broadstairs, put aside by doubtful reports of its
sanitary condition; but it will be seen presently
that there was another graver interruption. With
his work well off his hands, however, he had been
getting on better where he was; and they had all
been very merry. "Yes," he said, writing after
a couple of days (23rd of September); "we have
"been sufficiently rollicking since I finished the
"number; and have had great games at rounders
"every afternoon, with all Bonchurch looking on;
"but I begin to long for a little peace and soli-
"tude. And now for my less pleasing piece of
"news. The sea has been running very high, and
"Leech, while bathing, was knocked over by a
"bad blow from a great wave on the forehead.
"He is in bed, and had twenty of his namesakes
"on his temples this morning. When I heard of
"him just now, he was asleep—which he had not
"been all night." He closed his letter hopefully, but

BONCHURCH:
1849.

Browne's
sketch for
Micawber.

Again making
merry.

Accident to
Leech.

BONCHURCH:
1849.

Its conse-
quences.

C. D. mes-
merising.

next day (24th September) I had less favourable report. "Leech has been very ill with congestion of the brain ever since I wrote, and "being still in excessive pain has had ice to his "head continuously, and been bled in the arm "besides. Beard and I sat up there, all night." On the 26th he wrote. "My plans are all unsettled by Leech's illness; as of course I do not like "to leave this place while I can be of any service "to him and his good little wife. But all visitors "are gone to-day, and Winterbourne once more left "to the engaging family of the inimitable B. Ever "since I wrote to you Leech has been seriously "worse, and again very heavily bled. The night "before last he was in such an alarming state of "restlessness, which nothing could relieve, that "I proposed to Mrs. Leech to try magnetism. "Accordingly, in the middle of the night I fell "to; and, after a very fatiguing bout of it, put "him to sleep for an hour and thirty-five minutes. "A change came on in the sleep, and he is "decidedly better. I talked to the astounded little "Mrs. Leech across him, when he was asleep, as "if he had been a truss of hay. . . . What do "you think of my setting up in the magnetic line "with a large brass plate? 'Terms, twenty-five "guineas per nap.'" When he wrote again on the 30th, he had completed his sixth number; and his friend was so clearly on the way to recovery that he was next day to leave for Broadstairs with his wife, her sister, and the two little girls. "I will merely add that I entreat to be kindly

"remembered to Thackeray" (who had a dangerous illness at this time); "that I think I have, without a doubt, *got* the Periodical notion; and that I am writing under the depressing and "discomforting influence of paying off the tribe of bills that pour in upon an unfortunate family-young-man on the eve of a residence like this. "So no more at present from the disgusted, "though still inimitable, and always affectionate B."

BONCHURCH.
1849.

Depressing
influences.

He stayed at Broadstairs till he had finished his number seven, and what else chiefly occupied him were thoughts about the Periodical of which account will presently be given. "Such a night "and day of rain," ran his first letter, "I should "think the oldest inhabitant never saw! and yet, "in the ould formiliar Broadstairs, I somehow or "other don't mind it much. The change has "done Mamey a world of good, and I have begun "to sleep again. As for news, you might as well "ask me for dolphins. Nobody in Broadstairs—" "to speak of. Certainly nobody in Ballard's. We "are in the part, which is the house next door to "the hotel itself, that we once had for three years "running, and just as quiet and snug now as it "was then. I don't think I shall return before "the 20th or so, when the number is done; but I "may, in some inconstant freak, run up to you "before. Preliminary despatches and advices "shall be forwarded in any case to the fragrant "neighbourhood of Clare-market and the Portugal-"street burying-ground." Such was his polite designation of my whereabouts: for which nevertheless he had secret likings. "On the Portsmouth

At BROAD-
STAIRS.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1849.

Railway
travellers.

"railway, coming here, encountered Kenyon. On "the ditto ditto at Reigate, encountered young "Dilke, and took him in tow to Canterbury. On "the ditto ditto at ditto (meaning Reigate), encountered Fox, M.P. for Oldham, and his "daughter. All within an hour. Young Dilke "great about the proposed Exposition under the "direction of H.R.H. Prince Albert, and evincing, "very pleasantly to me, unbounded faith in our "old friend his father." There was one more letter, taking a rather gloomy view of public affairs in connection with an inflated pastoral from Doctor Wiseman "given out of the Flaminian "Gate," and speaking dolefully of some family matters; which was subscribed, each word forming a separate line, "Yours Despondently, And "Disgustedly, Wilkins Micawber."

Again at
BROADSTAIRS.
1850.

His visit to the little watering-place in the following year was signalled by his completion of the most famous of his novels, and his letters otherwise were occupied by elaborate managerial preparation for the private performances at Knebworth. But again the plague of itinerant music flung him into such fevers of irritation, that he finally resolved against any renewed attempt to carry on important work here; and the summer of 1851, when he was only busy with miscellaneous writing, was the last of his regular residences in the place. He then let his London house for the brief remainder of its term; ran away at the end of May, when some grave family sorrows had befallen him, from the crowds and excitements of the Great Exhibition; and with

The Exhibi-
tion year.
1851.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1851.

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intervals of absence, chiefly at the Guild representations, stayed in his favourite Fort-house by the sea until October, when he took possession of Tavistock-house. From his letters may be added a few notices of this last holiday at Broadstairs, which he had always afterwards a kindly word for; and to which he said pleasant adieu in the sketch of "Our Watering-place," written shortly before he left.

"It is more delightful here" (1st of June) "than I can express. Corn growing, larks singing, garden full of flowers, fresh air on the sea. —O it is wonderful! Why can't you come down next Saturday (bringing work) and go back with me on Wednesday for the *Copperfield* banquet? Concerning which, of course, I say yes to Talfourd's kind proposal. Lemon by all means. And—don't you think? Browne? Whosoever, besides, pleases Talfourd will please me." Great was the success of that banquet. The scene was the Star-and-Garter at Richmond; Thackeray and Alfred Tennyson joined in the celebration; and the generous giver was in his best vein. I have rarely seen Dickens happier than he was amid the sunshine of that day. Jerrold and Thackeray returned to town with us; and a little argument between them about money and its uses, led to an avowal of Dickens about himself to which I may add the confirmation of all our years of intercourse. "No man," he said, "attaches less importance to the possession of money, or less disparagement to the want of it, than I do."

June by the
sea.

A *Copperfield*
banquet.

C. D. on
money.

Vague mention of a "next book" escaped in

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1851.

Smuggling.

a letter at the end of July, on which I counselled longer abstinence. "Good advice," he replied, "but difficult: I wish you'd come to us and preach another kind of abstinence. Fancy the Preventive men finding a lot of brandy in barrels on the rocks here, the day before yesterday! Nobody knows anything about the barrels, of course. They were intended to have been landed with the next tide, and to have been just covered at low water. But the water being unusually low, the tops of the barrels became revealed to Preventive telescopes, and descent was made upon the brandy. They are always at it, hereabouts, I have no doubt. And of course B would not have had any of it. O dear no! certainly not."

His reading.

His reading was considerable and very various at these intervals of labour, and in this particular summer took in all the minor tales as well as the plays of Voltaire, several of the novels (old favourites with him) of Paul de Kock, Ruskin's *Lamps of Architecture*, and a surprising number of books of African and other travel for which he had insatiable relish: but the notices of all this in his letters were few. "By the bye, I observe, reading that wonderful book the *French Revolution* again, for the 500th time, that Carlyle, who knows everything, don't know what Mumbo Jumbo is. It is not an Idol. It is a secret preserved among the men of certain African tribes, and never revealed by any of them, for the punishment of their women. Mumbo Jumbo comes in hideous form out of the forest, or the

A correction
for Carlyle.

"mud, or the river, or where not, and flogs some
 "woman who has been backbiting, or scolding,
 "or with some other domestic mischief disturbing
 "the general peace. Carlyle seems to confound
 "him with the common Fetish; but he is quite
 "another thing. He is a disguised man; and all
 "about him is a freemasons' secret *among the*
 "*men.*"—"I finished the *Scarlet Letter* yesterday.
 "It falls off sadly after that fine opening scene.
 "The psychological part of the story is very
 "much overdone, and not truly done I think.
 "Their suddenness of meeting and agreeing to
 "go away together, after all those years, is very
 "poor. Mr. Chillingworth ditto. The child out
 "of nature altogether. And Mr. Dimmisdale cer-
 "tainly never could have begotten her." In Mr.
 Hawthorne's earlier books he had taken especial
 pleasure; his *Mosses from an Old Manse* having
 been the first book he placed in my hands on
 his return from America, with reiterated injunc-
 tions to read it. I will add a word or two of what
 he wrote of the clever story of another popular
 writer, because it hits well the sort of ability
 that has become so common, which escapes the
 highest point of cleverness, but stops short only
 at the very verge of it. "The story extremely
 "good indeed; but all the strongest things of
 "which it is capable, missed. It shows just how
 "far that kind of power can go. It is more like
 "a note of the idea than anything else. It seems
 "to me, as if it were written by somebody who
 "lived next door to the people, rather than inside
 "of 'em."

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1851.

Mumbo
Jumbo.

Hawthorne's
Scarlet Letter.

Good
criticism.

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1851.

Thoughts of a
new book.

The old rest-
lessness.

Black House in
his mind.

Beginning on
a Friday.

I joined him for the August regatta and stayed a pleasant fortnight. His paper on "Our Water-
"ing-place" appeared while I was there, and great
was the local excitement. His own restlessness
with fancies for a new book had now risen
beyond bounds, and for the time he was eager
to open it in that prettiest quaintest bit of Eng-
lish landscape, Strood valley, which reminded
him always of a Swiss scene. I had not left him
many days when these lines followed me. "I
"very nearly packed up a portmanteau and went
"away, the day before yesterday, into the moun-
"tains of Switzerland, alone! Still the victim of
"an intolerable restlessness, I shouldn't be at all
"surprised if I wrote to you one of these morn-
"ings from under Mont Blanc. I sit down be-
"tween whiles to think of a new story, and, as it
"begins to grow, such a torment of a desire to
"be anywhere but where I am; and to be going
"I don't know where, I don't know why; takes
"hold of me, that it is like being *driven away*.
"If I had had a passport, I sincerely believe I
"should have gone to Switzerland the night be-
"fore last. I should have remembered our en-
"gagement—say, at Paris, and have come back
"for it; but should probably have left by the next
"express train."

At the end of November, when he had settled
himself in his new London abode, the book was
begun; and as generally happened with the more
important incidents of his life, but always acci-
dentally, begun on a Friday.

CHAPTER XLIII.

HAUNTED MAN AND HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

1848—1850.

It has been seen that his fancy for his Christmas book of 1848 first arose to him at Lausanne in the summer of 1846, and that, after writing its opening pages in the autumn of the following year, he laid it aside under the pressure of his *Dombey*. These lines were in the letter that closed his 1848 Broadstairs holiday. "At last I
 "am a mentally maturing of the Christmas book
 "—or, as poor Macrone* used to write, 'booke,'

LONDON:
1848.Leaving
Broadstairs.

* The mention of this name may remind me to state that I have received, in reference to the account in my first volume of Dickens's repurchase of his *Sketches* from Mr. Macrone, a letter from the solicitor and friend of that gentleman so expressed that I could have greatly wished to revise my narrative into nearer agreement with its writer's wish. But farther enquiry, and an examination of the books of Messrs. Chapman and Hall, have confirmed the statement given. Mr. Hansard is in error in supposing that "unsold "impressions" of the books were included in the transaction (the necessary requirement being simply that the small re-

Pages 151-4
of Vol. I.

LONDON:
1848.

Completion
of Christmas
tale.

“‘boke,’ ‘buke,’ &c.” It was the first labour to which he applied himself at his return.

In London it soon came to maturity; was published duly as *The Haunted Man, or the Ghost's Bargain*; sold largely, beginning with a subscription of twenty thousand; and had a great success on the Adelphi stage, to which it was rather cleverly adapted by Lemon. He had placed on its title page originally four lines from Tennyson's "Departure,"

mainders on hand should be transferred with a view to being "wasted"): I know myself that it could not have included any supposed right of Mr. Macrone to have a novel written for him, because upon that whole matter, and his continued unauthorised advertisements of the tale, I decided myself the reference against him: and Mr. Hansard may be assured that the £2000 was paid for the copyright alone. For the same copyright, a year before, Dickens had received £250, both the first and second series being included in the payment; and he had already had about the same sum as his half share of the profits of sales. I quote the close of Mr. Hansard's letter. "Macrone no doubt was an adventurer, but he was

Friendly plea
for Mr. Ma-
crone.

"sanguine to the highest degree. He was a dreamer of "dreams, putting no restraint on his exultant hopes by the "reflection that he was not dealing justly towards others. "But reproach has fallen upon him from wrong quarters. "He died in poverty, and his creditors received nothing from "his estate. But that was because he had paid away all he "had, and all he had derived from trust and credit, to "authors." This may have been so, but Dickens was not among the authors so benefited. The *Sketches* repurchased for the high price I have named never afterwards really justified such an outlay.

“And o’er the hills, and far away
 “Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 “Beyond the night, across the day,
 “Thro’ all the world it follow’d him;”

LONDON:

1848.

 Dropped
 motto.

but they were less applicable to the close than to the opening of the tale, and were dropped before publication. The hero is a great chemist, a lecturer at an old foundation, a man of studious philosophic habits, haunted with recollections of the past “o’er which his melancholy sits on brood,” thinking his knowledge of the present a worthier substitute, and at last parting with that portion of himself which he thinks he can safely cast away. The recollections are of a great wrong done him in early life, and of all the sorrow consequent upon it; and the ghost he holds nightly conference with, is the darker presentiment of himself embodied in those bitter recollections. This part is finely managed. Out of heaped-up images of gloomy and wintry fancies, the supernatural takes a shape which is not forced or violent; and the dialogue which is no dialogue, but a kind of dreary dreamy echo, is a piece of ghostly imagination better than Mrs. Radcliffe. The boon desired is granted and the bargain struck. He is not only to lose his own recollection of grief and wrong, but to destroy the like memory in all whom he approaches. By this means the effect is shown in humble as well as higher minds, in the worst poverty as in competence or ease, always with the same result. The over-thinking sage loses his own affections

The hero.

 The “ghost”
 in the story.

 The “bar-
 gain.”

LONDON:
1848.

A fine con-
trast.

The Tetterby
family.

and sympathy, sees them crushed in others, and is brought to the level of the only creature whom he cannot change or influence, an outcast of the streets, a boy whom the mere animal appetites have turned into a small fiend. Never having had his mind awakened, evil is this creature's good; avarice, irreverence, and vindictiveness, are his nature; sorrow has no place in his memory; and from his brutish propensities the philosopher can take nothing away. The juxtaposition of two people whom such opposite means have put in the same moral position is a stroke of excellent art. There are plenty of incredibilities and inconsistencies, just as in the pleasant *Cricket on the Hearth*, which one does not care about, but enjoy rather than otherwise; and, as in that charming little book, there were minor characters as delightful as anything in Dickens. The Tetterby group, in whose humble, homely, kindly, ungainly figures there is everything that could suggest itself to a clear eye, a piercing wit, and a loving heart, became enormous favourites. Tilly Slowboy and her little dot of a baby, charging folks with it as if it were an offensive instrument, or handing it about as if it were something to drink, were not more popular than poor Johnny Tetterby staggering under his Moloch of an infant, the Juggernaut that crushes all his enjoyments. The story itself consists of nothing more than the effects of the Ghost's gift upon the various groups of people introduced, and the way the end is arrived at is very specially in Dickens's

manner. What the highest exercise of the intellect had missed is found in the simplest form of the affections. The wife of the custodian of the college where the chemist is professor, in whom are all the unselfish virtues that can beautify and endear the humblest condition, is the instrument of the change. Such sorrow as she has suffered had made her only zealous to relieve others' sufferings: and the discontented wise man learns from her example that the world is, after all, a much happier compromise than it seems to be, and life easier than wisdom is apt to think it; that grief gives joy its relish, purifying what it touches truly; and that "sweet are the uses of "adversity" when its clouds are not the shadow of dishonour. All this can be shown but lightly within such space, it is true; and in the machinery a good deal has to be taken for granted. But Dickens was quite justified in turning aside from objections of that kind. "You must suppose," he wrote to me (21st of November), "that the "Ghost's saving clause gives him those glimpses "without which it would be impossible to carry "out the idea. Of course my point is that bad "and good are inextricably linked in remembrance, "and that you could not choose the enjoyment of "recollecting only the good. To have all the "best of it you must remember the worst also. "My intention in the other point you mention is, "that he should not know himself how he communicates the gift, whether by look or touch; "and that it should diffuse itself in its own way

LONDON:
1848.
Management
of the close.

Teachings of
the little
story.

C. D.'s
statement of
his intention.

LONDON:
1848.

Moral of the
story.

Forgive that
you may
forget.

"in each case. I can make this clearer by a very few lines in the second part. It is not only necessary to be so, for the variety of the story, but I think it makes the thing wilder and "stranger." Critical niceties are indeed out of place, where wildness and strangeness in the means matter less than that there should be clearness in the drift and intention. Dickens leaves no doubt as to this. He thoroughly makes out his fancy, that no man should so far question the mysterious dispensations of evil in this world as to desire to lose the recollection of such injustice or misery as he may suppose it to have done to himself. There may have been sorrow, but there was the kindness that assuaged it; there may have been wrong, but there was the charity that forgave it; and with both are connected inseparably so many thoughts that soften and exalt whatever else is in the sense of memory, that what is good and pleasurable in life would cease to continue so if these were forgotten. The old proverb does not tell you to forget that you may forgive, but to forgive that you may forget. It is forgiveness of wrong, for forgetfulness of the evil that was in it; such as poor old Lear begged of Cordelia.

The design for his much-thought-of new Periodical was still "dim," as we have seen, when the first cogitation of it at Bonchurch occupied him; but the expediency of making it clearer came soon after with a visit from Mr. Evans, who brought his half-year's accounts of sales, and

some small disappointment for him in those of *Copperfield*. "The accounts are rather shy, after *BONCHURCH : 1849. Copperfield sales.*" *Dombey*, and what you said comes true after all. "I am not sorry I cannot bring myself to care much for what opinions people may form; and "I have a strong belief, that, if any of my books "are read years hence, *Dombey* will be remembered as among the best of them: but passing "influences are important for the time, and as "*Chuzzlewit* with its small sale sent me up, *Dom- Chuzzlewit and Dombey sales.* "bey's large sale has tumbled me down. Not "very much, however, in real truth. These accounts only include the first three numbers, have "of course been burdened with all the heavy expenses of number one, and ought not in reason "to be complained of. But it is clear to me that "the Periodical must be set agoing in the spring; "and I have already been busy, at odd half-hours, "in shadowing forth a name and an idea. Evans Notions and names. "says they have but one opinion repeated to them "of *Copperfield*, and they feel very confident about "it. A steady twenty-five thousand, which it is "now on the verge of, will do very well. The "back numbers are always going off. Read the "enclosed."

It was a letter from a Russian man of letters, dated from St. Petersburg and signed "Trinarch *Letter from Russia.* "Ivansvitch Wredenskii," sending him a translation of *Dombey* into Russian; and informing him that his works, which before had only been translated in the journals, and with certain omissions, had now been translated in their entire

BONCHURCH: form by his correspondent, though even he had
 1849.
 C. D. trans- found an omission to be necessary in his version
 lated into of *Pickwick*. He adds, with an exquisite courtesy
 Russian. to our national tongue which is yet not forgetful
 of the claims of his own nationality, that his
 difficulties (in the Sam Weller direction and others)
 had arisen from the "impossibility of portraying
 "faithfully the beauties of the original in the
 "Russian language, which, though the richest in
 "Europe in its expressiveness, is far from being
 "elaborate enough for literature like other civilized
 "languages." He had however, he assured Dickens,
 been unremitting in his efforts to live with his
 thoughts; and the exalted opinion he had formed
 of them was attended by only one wish, that
 such a writer "could but have expanded under a
 "Russian sky!" Still, his fate was an enviable
 one. "For the last eleven years your name has
 "enjoyed a wide celebrity in Russia, and from the
 "banks of the Neva to the remotest parts of
 "Siberia you are read with avidity. Your *Dombey*
 "continues to inspire with enthusiasm the whole
 "of the literary Russia." Much did we delight
 in the good Wredenskii; and for a long time, on
 anything going "contrairy" in the public or private
 direction with him, he would tell me he had
 ordered his portmanteau to be packed for the
 more sympathizing and congenial climate of "the
 "remotest parts of Siberia."

Compli- mentary.
 Sympathy of
 Siberia.

The week before he left Bonchurch I again
 had news of the old and often recurring fancy.
 "The old notion of the Periodical, which has

"been agitating itself in my mind for so long, I
 "really think is at last gradually growing into
 "form." That was on the 24th of September;
 and on the 7th of October, from Broadstairs, I
 had something of the form it had been taking.
 "I do great injustice to my floating ideas (pretty
 "speedily and comfortably settling down into
 "orderly arrangement) by saying anything about
 "the Periodical now: but my notion is a weekly
 "journal, price either three-halfpence or two-
 "pence, matter in part original and in part
 "selected, and always having, if possible, a little
 "good poetry . . . Upon the selected matter, I
 "have particular notions. One is, that it should
 "always be *a subject*. For example, a history of
 "Piracy; in connexion with which there is a vast
 "deal of extraordinary, romantic, and almost un-
 "known matter. A history of Knight-errantry,
 "and the wild old notion of the Sangreal. A
 "history of Savages, showing the singular respects
 "in which all savages are like each other; and
 "those in which civilised men, under circum-
 "stances of difficulty, soonest become like savages.
 "A history of remarkable characters, good and
 "bad, *in* history; to assist the reader's judgment
 "in his observation of men, and in his estimates
 "of the truth of many characters in fiction. All
 "these things, and fifty others that I have already
 "thought of, would be compilations; through the
 "whole of which the general intellect and purpose
 "of the paper should run, and in which there
 "would be scarcely less interest than in the original

BROAD-
 STAIRS:
 1849.

Periodical
 growing into
 form.

As to selected
 matter.

Proposed
 series of
 "histories."

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1849.

As to original
matter.

Connecting
link.

A Shadow for
everywhere;

"matter. The original matter to be essays, reviews, letters, theatrical criticisms, &c, &c, as amusing as possible, but all distinctly and boldly going to what in one's own view ought to be the spirit of the people and the time . . . Now to bind all this together, and to get a character established as it were which any of the writers may maintain without difficulty, I want to suppose a certain SHADOW, which may go into any place, by sunlight, moonlight, starlight, firelight, candlelight, and be in all homes, and all nooks and corners, and be supposed to be cognisant of everything, and go everywhere, without the least difficulty. Which may be in the Theatre, the Palace, the House of Commons, the Prisons, the Unions, the Churches, on the Railroad, on the Sea, abroad and at home: a kind of semi-omniscient, omnipresent, intangible creature. I don't think it would do to call the paper THE SHADOW: but I want something tacked to that title, to express the notion of its being a cheerful, useful, and always welcome Shadow. I want to open the first number with this Shadow's account of himself and his family. I want to have all the correspondence addressed to him. I want him to issue his warnings from time to time, that he is going to fall on such and such a subject; or to expose such and such a piece of humbug; or that he may be expected shortly in such and such a place. I want the compiled part of the paper to express the idea of this Shadow's having been in libraries, and among the books:

“referred to. I want him to loom as a fanciful
 “thing all over London; and to get up a general
 “notion of ‘What will the Shadow say about this,
 “‘I wonder? What will the Shadow say about
 “‘that? Is the Shadow here?’ and so forth. Do
 “you understand? . . . I have an enormous dif-
 “ficulty in expressing what I mean, in this stage
 “of the business; but I think the importance of
 “the idea is, that once stated on paper, there is
 “no difficulty in keeping it up. That it presents
 “an odd, unsubstantial, whimsical, new thing: a
 “sort of previously unthought-of Power going
 “about. That it will concentrate into one focus
 “all that is done in the paper. That it sets up
 “a creature which isn’t the Spectator, and isn’t
 “Isaac Bickerstaff, and isn’t anything of that kind:
 “but in which people will be perfectly willing
 “to believe, and which is just mysterious and
 “quaint enough to have a sort of charm for their
 “imagination, while it will represent common-
 “sense and humanity. I want to express in the
 “title, and in the grasp of the idea to express
 “also, that it is the Thing at everybody’s elbow,
 “and in everybody’s footsteps. At the window,
 “by the fire, in the street, in the house, from in-
 “fancy to old age, everyone’s inseparable com-
 “panion . . . Now do you make anything out of
 “this? which I let off as if I were a bladder full
 “of it, and you had punctured me. I have not
 “breathed the idea to any one; but I have a
 “lively hope that it *is* an idea, and that out of it
 “the whole scheme may be hammered.”

BROAD-
STAIRS:
1849.

Hopes of
success.

Expected
advantages.

Something
for every-
body.

Excellent the idea doubtless, and so described *My doubts.*

LONDON:
1849.

Incompati-
bilities of
design.

Again at
home.

New design
chosen.

in his letter that hardly anything more characteristic survives him. But I could not make anything out of it that had a quite feasible look. The ordinary ground of miscellaneous reading, selection, and compilation out of which it was to spring, seemed to me no proper soil for the imaginative produce it was meant to bear. As his fancies grew and gathered round it, they had given it too much of the range and scope of his own exhaustless land of invention and marvel; and the very means proposed for letting in the help of others would only more heavily have weighted himself. Not to trouble the reader now with objections given him in detail, my judgment was clear against his plan; less for any doubt of the effect if its parts could be brought to combine, than for my belief that it was not in that view practicable; and though he did not immediately accept my reasons, he acquiesced in them ultimately. "I do not lay much stress on your "grave doubts about Periodical, but more anon." The more anon resolved itself into conversations out of which the shape given to the project was that which it finally took.

It was to be a weekly miscellany of general literature; and its stated objects were to be, to contribute to the entertainment and instruction of all classes of readers, and to help in the discussion of the more important social questions of the time. It was to comprise short stories by others as well as himself; matters of passing interest in the liveliest form that could be given to them; subjects suggested by books that might

most be attracting attention; and poetry in every number if possible, but in any case something of romantic fancy. This was to be a cardinal point. There was to be no mere utilitarian spirit; with all familiar things, but especially those repellent on the surface, something was to be connected that should be fanciful or kindly; and the hardest workers were to be taught that their lot is not necessarily excluded from the sympathies and graces of imagination. This was all finally settled by the close of 1849, when a general announcement of the intended adventure was made. There remained only a title and an assistant editor; and I am happy now to remember that for the latter important duty Mr. Wills was chosen at my suggestion. He discharged its duties with admirable patience and ability for twenty years, and Dickens's later life had no more intimate friend.

LONDON:
1849.

What it was
to comprise.

First an-
nouncement
made.

Assistant
editor ap-
pointed.

The title took some time and occupied many letters. One of the first thought-of has now the curious interest of having foreshadowed, by the motto proposed to accompany it, the title of the series of *All the Year Round* which he was led to substitute for the older series in 1859. "THE ROBIN. With this motto from Goldsmith. '*The red-breast, celebrated for its affection to mankind, continues with us, the year round.*'" That however was rejected. Then came: "MANKIND. This 'I think very good.'" It followed the other nevertheless. After it came: "And here a strange 'idea, but with decided advantages. 'CHARLES 'DICKENS. A weekly journal designed for the

Selection of
title.

LONDON: 1850.	<p>“instruction and entertainment of all classes of “readers. CONDUCTED BY HIMSELF.” Still, there was something wanting in that also. Next day arrived: “I really think if there <i>be</i> anything “wanting in the other name, that this is very “pretty, and just supplies it. THE HOUSEHOLD “VOICE. I have thought of many others, as— “THE HOUSEHOLD GUEST. THE HOUSEHOLD “FACE. THE COMRADE. THE MICROSCOPE. THE “HIGHWAY OF LIFE. THE LEVER. THE ROLLING “YEARS. THE HOLLY TREE (with two lines from “Southey for a motto). EVERYTHING. But I “rather think the VOICE is it.” It was near indeed; but the following day came, “HOUSEHOLD “WORDS. This is a very pretty name:” and the choice was made.</p>
Names proposed.	
The name chosen.	
Appearance of first number.	<p>The first number appeared on Saturday the 30th of March 1850, and contained among other things the beginning of a story by a very original writer, Mrs. Gaskell, for whose powers he had a high admiration, and with whom he had friendly intercourse during many years. Other opportunities will arise for mention of those with whom this new labour brought him into personal communication, but I may at once say that of all the writers, before unknown, whom his journal helped to make familiar to a wide world of readers, he had the strongest personal interest in Mr. Sala, and placed at once in the highest rank his capabilities of help in such an enterprise.* An il-</p>
First contributors.	
His opinion of Mr. Sala.	<p>* Mr. Sala's first paper appeared in September 1851, and in the same month of the following year I had an allusion in a letter from Dickens which I shall hope to have Mr. Sala's</p>

lustrative trait of what I have named as its cardinal point to him will fitly close my account of its establishment. Its first number, still unpublished, had not seemed to him quite to fulfil his promise, "tenderly to cherish the light of fancy inherent in all breasts;" and, as soon as he received the proof of the second, I heard from him. "Looking over the suggested contents of number two at breakfast this morning" (Brighton: 14th of March 1850) "I felt an uneasy sense of there being a want of something tender, which would apply to some universal household knowledge. Coming down in the railroad the other night (always a wonderfully suggestive place to me when I am alone) I was looking at the stars, and revolving a little idea about them. Putting now these two things together, I wrote the enclosed little paper, straightway; and should like you to read it before you send it to the printers (it will not take you five minutes), and let me have a proof by return." This was the child's dream of a star, which opened his second number; and, not appearing among his reprinted

LONDON:
1850.

AT BRIGHTON.

The want first
elt by him.

The want
supplied.

forgiveness for printing. "That was very good indeed of 'Sala's' (some essay he had written). "He was twenty guineas in advance, by the bye, and I told Wills delicately to make him a present of it. I find him a very conscientious fellow. When he gets money ahead, he is not like the imbecile youth who so often do the like in Wellington-street" (the office of *Household Words*) "and walk off, but only works more industriously. I think he improves with everything he does. He looks sharply at the alterations in his articles, I observe; and takes the hint next time."

BRIGHTON:
1850.

The child's
dream of a
star.

pieces, may justify a word or two of description. It is of a brother and sister, constant child-companions, who used to make friends of a star, watching it together until they knew when and where it would rise, and always bidding it good-night; so that when the sister dies the lonely brother still connects her with the star, which he then sees opening as a world of light, and its rays making a shining pathway from earth to heaven; and he also sees angels waiting to receive travellers up that sparkling road, his little sister among them; and he thinks ever after that he belongs less to the earth than to the star where his sister is; and he grows up to youth and through manhood and old age, consoled still under the successive domestic bereavements that fall to his earthly lot by renewal of that vision of his childhood; until at last, lying on his own bed of death, he feels that he is moving as a child to his child-sister, and he thanks his heavenly father that the star had so often opened before to receive the dear ones who awaited him.

A fancy
derived from
his childhood.

His sister Fanny and himself, he told me long before this paper was written, used to wander at night about a churchyard near their house, looking up at the stars; and her early death, of which I am now to speak, had vividly reawakened all the childish associations which made her memory dear to him.

CHAPTER XLIV.

LAST YEARS IN DEVONSHIRE TERRACE.

1848—1851.

EXCEPTING always the haunts and associations of his childhood, Dickens had no particular sentiment of locality, and any special regard for houses he had lived in was not a thing noticeable in him. But he cared most for Devonshire-terrace, perhaps for the bit of ground attached to it; and it was with regret he suddenly discovered, at the close of 1847, that he should have to resign it "next lady-day three years. I had thought the "lease two years more." To that brief remaining time belong some incidents of which I have still to give account; and I connect them with the house in which he lived during the progress of what is generally thought his greatest book, and of what I think were his happiest years.

LONDON:
1848-51.
Sentiment
about places.

We had never had such intimate confidences as in the interval since his return from Paris; but these have been used in my narrative of the childhood and boyish experiences, and what remain are incidental only. Of the fragment of autobiography there also given, the origin has

Confidences.

LONDON:
1848-51.

Aut., p. 124.

Personal
revelations.

Early
memories.

Eldest sister's
illness.

been told: but the intention of leaving such a record had been in his mind, we now see, at an earlier date; and it was the very depth of our interest in the opening of his fragment that led to the larger design in which it became absorbed. "I hardly know why I write this," was his own comment on one of his personal revelations, "but "the more than friendship which has grown between us seems to force it on me in my present "mood. We shall speak of it all, you and I, "Heaven grant, wisely and wonderingly many "and many a time in after years. In the mean- "while I am more at rest for having opened all "my heart and mind to you. . . This day eleven "years, poor dear Mary died."*

That was written on the seventh of May 1848, but another sadness impending at the time was taking his thoughts still farther back; to when he trotted about with his little elder sister in the small garden to the house at Portsea. The faint hope for her which Elliotson had given him in Paris had since completely broken down; and I was to hear, in less than two months after the letter just quoted, how nearly the end was come.

"A change took place in poor Fanny," he wrote on the 5th of July, "about the middle of the day

* I take the opportunity of saying that there was an omission of three words in the epitaph quoted on a former page (vol. I. p. 148). The headstone at the grave in Kensal-green bears this inscription: "Young, beautiful, and good, "God in His mercy numbered her among His angels at the "early age of seventeen."

LONDON:
1848-51.

"yesterday, which took me out there last night.
 "Her cough suddenly ceased almost, and, strange
 "to say, she immediately became aware of her
 "hopeless state; to which she resigned herself,
 "after an hour's unrest and struggle, with extra-
 "ordinary sweetness and constancy. The irrita-
 "bility passed, and all hope faded away; though
 "only two nights before, she had been planning
 "for 'after Christmas.' She is greatly changed.
 "I had a long interview with her to-day, alone;
 "and when she had expressed some wishes about
 "the funeral, and her being buried in uncon-
 "secrated ground" (Mr. Burnett's family were dis-
 "senter), "I asked her whether she had any care
 "or anxiety in the world. She said No, none. It
 "was hard to die at such a time of life, but she
 "had no alarm whatever in the prospect of the
 "change; felt sure we should meet again in a
 "better world; and although they had said she
 "might rally for a time, did not really wish it.
 "She said she was quite calm and happy, relied
 "upon the mediation of Christ, and had no terror
 "at all. She had worked very hard, even when
 "ill; but believed that was in her nature, and
 "neither regretted nor complained of it. Burnett
 "had been always very good to her; they had
 "never quarrelled; she was sorry to think of his
 "going back to such a lonely home; and was
 "distressed about her children, but not painfully
 "so. She showed me how thin and worn she
 "was; spoke about an invention she had heard
 "of that she would like to have tried, for the de-

At his sister's
sick-bed.

Last thoughts.

LONDON:
1848-51.

Resignation
and hope.

Natural fears.

Sister's death.

"formed child's back; called to my remembrance
"all our sister Letitia's patience and steadiness;
"and, though she shed tears sometimes, clearly
"impressed upon me that her mind was made up,
"and at rest. I asked her very often, if she
"could ever recall anything that she could leave
"to my doing, to put it down, or mention it to
"somebody if I was not there; and she said she
"would, but she firmly believed that there was
"nothing—nothing. Her husband being young,
"she said, and her children infants, she could not
"help thinking sometimes, that it would be very
"long in the course of nature before they were
"re-united; but she knew that was a mere human
"fancy, and could have no reality after she was
"dead. Such an affecting exhibition of strength
"and tenderness, in all that early decay, is quite
"indescribable. I need not tell you how it moved
"me. I cannot look round upon the dear chil-
"dren here, without some misgiving that this sad
"disease will not perish out of our blood with
"her; but I am sure I have no selfishness in the
"thought, and God knows how small the world
"looks to one who comes out of such a sick-
"room on a bright summer day. I don't know
"why I write this before going to bed. I only
"know that in the very pity and grief of my
"heart, I feel as if it were doing something."
After not many weeks she died, and the little
child who was her last anxiety did not long sur-
vive her.

In all the later part of the year Dickens's

thoughts were turning much to the form his next book should assume. A suggestion that he should write it in the first person, by way of change, had been thrown out by me, which he took at once very gravely; and this, with other things, though as yet not dreaming of any public use of his own personal and private recollections, conspired to bring about that resolve. The determination once taken, with what a singular truthfulness he contrived to blend the fact with the fiction may be shown by a small occurrence of this time. It has been inferred, from the vividness of the boy-impressions of Yarmouth in David's earliest experiences, that the place must have been familiar to his own boyhood: but the truth was that at the close of 1848 he first saw that celebrated sea-port. One of its earlier months had been signalled by an adventure in which Leech, Lemon, and myself took part with him, when, obtaining horses from Salisbury, we passed the whole of a March day in riding over every part of the Plain; visiting Stonehenge, and exploring Hazlitt's "hut" at Winterslow, birthplace of some of his finest essays; altogether with so brilliant a success that now (13th of November) he proposed to "repeat the Salisbury Plain idea "in a new direction in mid-winter, to wit, Black-gang Chine in the Isle of Wight, with dark "winter cliffs and roaring oceans." But mid-winter brought with it too much dreariness of its own, to render these stormy accompaniments to it very palatable; and on the last day of the year

LONDON:
1848-51.

Book to be
written in
first person.

To tell his
early life.

Riding over
Salisbury
Plain.

LONDON:
1848-51.

Visiting the
scene of a
tragedy.

he bethought him "it would be better to make
"an outburst to some old cathedral city we
"don't know, and what do you say to Norwich
"and Stanfield-hall?" Thither accordingly the
three friends went, illness at the last disabling
me; and of the result I heard (12th of January,
1849) that Stanfield-hall, the scene of a recent
frightful tragedy, had nothing attractive unless the
term might be applied to "a murderous look that
"seemed to invite such a crime. We arrived,"
continued Dickens, "between the Hall and Potass
"farm, as the search was going on for the pistol
"in a manner so consummately stupid, that there
"was nothing on earth to prevent any of Rush's
"labourers from accepting five pounds from Rush
"junior to find the weapon and give it to him.
"Norwich, a disappointment" (one pleasant face
"transformeth a city," but he was unable yet to
connect it with our delightful friend Elwin); "all
"save its place of execution, which we found fit
"for a gigantic scoundrel's exit. But the success
"of the trip, for me, was to come. Yarmouth,
"sir, where we went afterwards, is the strangest
"place in the wide world: one hundred and
"forty-six miles of hill-less marsh between it and
"London. More when we meet. I shall certainly
"try my hand at it." He made it the home of
his "little Em'ly."

First sees
Yarmouth.

Everything now was taking that direction
with him; and soon, to give his own account of
it, his mind was upon names "running like a
"high sea." Four days after the date of the last-

quoted letter ("all over happily, thank God, by
"four o'clock this morning") there came the birth of his eighth child and sixth son; whom at first he meant to call by Oliver Goldsmith's name, but settled afterwards into that of Henry Fielding; and to whom that early friend Ainsworth who had first made us known to each other, welcome and pleasant companion always, was asked to be godfather. Telling me of the change in the name of the little fellow, which he had made in a kind of homage to the style of work he was now so bent on beginning, he added, "What should you think of this for a notion of a character? 'Yes, that 'is very true: but now, *What's his motive?*' " "I fancy I could make something like it into a "kind of amusing and more innocent Pecksniff. " "Well now, yes—no doubt that was a fine thing " "to do! But now, stop a moment, let us see— " "*What's his motive?*" " Here again was but one of the many outward signs of fancy and fertility that accompanied the outset of all his more important books; though, as in their cases also, other moods of the mind incident to such beginnings were less favourable. "Deepest despondency, as usual, in commencing, besets me;" is the opening of the letter in which he speaks of what of course was always one of his first anxieties, the selection of a name. In this particular instance he had been undergoing doubts and misgivings to more than the usual degree. It was not until the 23rd of February he got to anything like the shape of a feasible title.

LONDON:
1848-51.

Birth of sixth
son.

Notion for a
character.

Incident to
new enter-
prises.

Choosing a
title.

LONDON:
1848-51.

Mag's
Diversions.

"should like to know how the enclosed (one of those I have been thinking of) strikes you, on a first acquaintance with it. It is odd, I think, and new; but it may have A's difficulty of being 'too comic, my boy.' I suppose I should have to add, though, by way of motto, 'And in short 'it led to the very Mag's Diversions. *Old Saying.*' Or would it be better, there being equal authority for either, 'And in short they all "played Mag's Diversions. *Old Saying?*'"

"Mag's Diversions.

"Being the personal history of
"MR. THOMAS MAG THE YOUNGER,
"Of Blunderstone House."

Thomas be-
comes David.

Blunderstone
becomes Cop-
perfield.

This was hardly satisfactory, I thought; and it soon became apparent that he thought so too, although within the next three days I had it in three other forms. "*Mag's Diversions*, being the "Personal History, Adventures, Experience and "Observation of Mr. David Mag the Younger, "of Blunderstone House." The second omitted Adventures, and called his hero Mr. David Mag the Younger, of Copperfield House. The third made nearer approach to what the destinies were leading him to, and transformed Mr. David Mag into Mr. David Copperfield the Younger and his great-aunt Margaret; retaining still as his leading title, *Mag's Diversions*. It is singular that it should never have occurred to him, while the name was thus strangely as by accident bringing

itself together, that the initials were but his own reversed; but he was much startled when I pointed this out, and protested it was just in keeping with the fates and chances which were always befalling him. "Why else," he said, "should I so obstinately have kept to that name when once it turned up?"

It was quite true that he did so, as I had curious proof following close upon the heels of that third proposal. "I wish," he wrote on the 26th of February, "you would look over carefully the titles now enclosed, and tell me to which you most incline. You will see that they give up *Mag* altogether, and refer exclusively to one name—that which I last sent you. I doubt whether I could, on the whole, get a better name."

LONDON:
1848-51.

Things of
destiny.

"Copperfield"
chosen.

"1. *The Copperfield Disclosures.* Being the personal history, experience, and observation, of Mr. David Copperfield the Younger, of Blunderstone House.

"2. *The Copperfield Records.* Being the personal history, experience, and observation, of Mr. David Copperfield the Younger, of Copperfield Cottage.

"3. *The Last Living Speech and Confession of David*

Copperfield Junior, of Blunderstone Lodge, who was never executed at the Old Bailey. Being his personal history found among his papers.

"4. *The Copperfield Survey of the World as it Rolled.* Varieties of it proposed.

Being the personal history, experience, and observation, of David Copperfield the Younger, of Blunderstone Rookery.

"5. *The Last Will and Testament of Mr. David Copperfield.* Being his

LONDON:
1848-51.

"personal history left as
"a legacy.
"6. *Copperfield*, *Complete*.
"Being the whole per-
"sonal history and ex-
"perience of Mr. David

"Copperfield of Blunder-
"stone House, which he
"never meant to be
"published on any ac-
"count.

"Or, the opening words of No. 6 might be *Copper-
"field's Entire*; and *The Copperfield Confessions*
"might open Nos. 1 and 2. Now, WHAT SAY
"YOU?"

Choice first
made.

What I said is to be inferred from what he wrote back on the 28th. "The *Survey* has been "my favourite from the first. Kate picked it out "from the rest, without my saying anything about "it. Georgy too. You hit upon it, on the first "glance. Therefore I have no doubt that it is "indisputably the best title; and I will stick to "it." There was a change nevertheless. His completion of the second chapter defined to himself, more clearly than before, the character of the book; and the propriety of rejecting everything not strictly personal from the name given to it. The words proposed, therefore, became ultimately these only: "The Personal History, "Adventures, Experience, and Observation of "David Copperfield the Younger, of Blunderstone "Rookery, which he never meant to be published "on any account." And the letter which told me that with this name it was finally to be launched on the first of May, told me also (19th April) the difficulties that still beset him at the opening. "My hand is out in the matter of *Copperfield*.

Title finally
determined.

"To-day and yesterday I have done nothing. LONDON:
1848-51.
"Though I know what I want to do, I am lum- Difficulties of
opening.
bering on like a stage-waggon. I can't even
"dine at the Temple to-day, I feel it so important
"to stick at it this evening, and make some head.
"I am quite aground; quite a literary Benedict,
"as he appeared when his heels wouldn't stay
"upon the carpet; and the long Copperfieldian
"perspective looks snowy and thick, this fine
"morning."* The allusion was to a dinner at Memorable
dinner.
his house the night before; when not only Rogers
had to be borne out, having fallen sick at the
table, but, as we rose soon after to quit the
dining-room, Mr. Jules Benedict had quite sud-
denly followed the poet's lead, and fallen pro-
strate on the carpet in the midst of us. Amid
the general consternation there seemed a want of
proper attendance on the sick: the distinguished
musician faring in this respect hardly so well as
the famous bard, by whose protracted sufferings Rogers and
Benedict.
in the library, whither he had been removed, the
sanitary help available on the establishment was
still absorbed; and as Dickens had been eloquent
during dinner on the atrocities of a pauper-farm-
ing case at Tooting which was then exciting a

* From letters of nearly the same date here is another War and
peace.
characteristic word: "Pen and ink before me! Am I not at
"work on *Copperfield*? Nothing else would have kept me
"here until half-past two on such a day. . . Indian news
"bad indeed. Sad things come of bloody war. If it were
"not for Elihu, I should be a peace and arbitration man."

LONDON:
1848-51.
Wit of Fon-
blanque.

fury of indignation, Fonblanque now declared him to be no better himself than a second Drouet, reducing his guests to a lamentable state by the food he had given them, and aggravating their sad condition by absence of all proper nursing. The joke was well kept up by Quin and Edwin Landseer, Lord Strangford joining in with a tragic sympathy for his friend the poet; and the banquet so dolefully interrupted ended in uproarious mirth. For nothing really serious had happened. Benedict went laughing away with his wife, and I helped Rogers on with his overshoes for his usual night-walk home. "Do you know how "many waistcoats I wear?" asked the poet of me, as I was doing him this service. I professed my inability to guess. "Five!" he said: "and here "they are!" Upon which he opened them, in the manner of the gravedigger in *Hamlet*, and showed me every one.

All's well
that ends
well.

Procter and
Macready.

That dinner was in the April of 1849, and among others present were Mrs. Procter and Mrs. Macready, dear and familiar names always in his house. No swifter or surer perception than Dickens's for what was solid and beautiful in character; he rated it higher than intellectual effort; and the same lofty place, first in his affection and respect, would have been Macready's and Procter's, if the one had not been the greatest of actors, and the other a poet as genuine as old Fletcher or Beaumont. There were present at this dinner also the American minister and Mrs. Bancroft (it was the year of that visit of Macready to America, which

ended in the disastrous Forrest riots); and it had among its guests Lady Graham, the wife of Sir James Graham, than whom not even the wit and beauty of her nieces, Mrs. Norton and Lady Dufferin, better represented the brilliant family of the Sheridans; so many of whose members, and these three above all, Dickens prized among his friends. The table that day will be "full" if I add the celebrated singer Miss Catherine Hayes, and her homely good-natured Irish mother, who startled us all very much by complimenting Mrs. Dickens on her having had for her father so clever a painter as Mr. Hogarth.

LONDON:
1848-51.

The
Sheridans.

Startling
compliment.

Others familiar to Devonshire-terrace in these years will be indicated if I name an earlier dinner (3rd of January), for the "christening" of the *Haunted Man*, when, besides Lemons, Evanses, Leeches, Bradburys, and Stanfields, there were present Tenniel, Topham, Stone, Robert Bell, and Thomas Beard. Next month (24th of March) I met at his table, Lord and Lady Lovelace; Milner Gibson, Mowbray Morris, Horace Twiss, and their wives; Lady Molesworth and her daughter (Mrs. Ford); John Hardwick, Charles Babbage, and Doctor Locock. That distinguished physician had attended the poor girl, Miss Abercrombie, whose death by strychnine led to the exposure of Wainwright's murders; and the opinion he had formed of her chances of recovery, the external indications of that poison being then but imperfectly known, was first shaken, he told me, by the gloomy and despairing cries of the old family nurse, that

"Christen-
ing" dinner.

Wain-
wright
murders.

LONDON:
1848-51.

her mother and her uncle had died exactly so! These, it was afterwards proved, had been among the murderer's former victims. The Lovelaces were frequent guests after the return from Italy, Sir George Crawford, so friendly in Genoa, having married Lord Lovelace's sister; and few had a greater warmth of admiration for Dickens than Lord Byron's "Ada," on whom Paul Dombey's death laid a strange fascination. They were again at a dinner got up in the following year for Scribe and the composer Halévy, who had come over to bring out the *Tempest* at Her Majesty's-theatre, then managed by Mr. Lumley, who with M. Van de Weyer, Mrs. Gore and her daughter, the Hogarths, and I think the fine French comedian, Samson, were also among those present. Earlier that year there were gathered at his dinner-table the John Delanes, Isambard Brunels, Thomas Longmans (friends since the earliest Broadstairs days, and special favourites always), Lord Mulgrave, and Lord Carlisle, with all of whom his intercourse was intimate and frequent, and became especially so with Delane in later years. Lord Carlisle amused us that night, I remember, by repeating what the good old Brougham had said to him of "those *Punch* people," expressing what was really his fixed belief. "They never get my "face, and are obliged" (which, like Pope, he always pronounced obleeged), "to put up with my "plaid trousers!" Of Lord Mulgrave, pleasantly associated with the first American experiences, let me add that he now went with us to several out-

Lord Byron's
Ada.

Dinner to
Halévy and
Scribe.

Brougham
and the
"Punch
people."

lying places of amusement of which he wished to acquire some knowledge, and which Dickens knew better than any man; small theatres, saloons, and gardens in city or borough, to which the Eagle and Britannia were as palaces; and I think he was of the party one famous night in the summer of 1849 (29th of June), when with Talfourd, Edwin Landseer, and Stanfield, we went to the *Battle of Waterloo* at Vauxhall, and were astounded to see pass in immediately before us, in a bright white overcoat, the great Duke himself, Lady Douro on his arm, the little Ladies Ramsay by his side, and everybody cheering and clearing the way before him. That the old hero enjoyed it all, there could be no doubt, and he made no secret of his delight in "Young Hernandez;" but the "Battle" was undeniably tedious, and it was impossible not to sympathize with the repeatedly and very audibly expressed wish of Talfourd, that "the Prussians "would come up!"

LONDON:
1848-51.

Expedition
with Lord
Mulgrave.

The Duke at
Vauxhall.

The preceding month was that of the start of *David Copperfield*, and to one more dinner (on the 12th) I may especially refer for those who were present at it. Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle came, Thackeray and Rogers, Mrs. Gaskell and Kenyon, Jerrold and Hablot Browne, with Mr. and Mrs. Tagart; and it was a delight to see the enjoyment of Dickens at Carlyle's laughing reply to questions about his health, that he was, in the language of Mr. Peggotty's housekeeper, a lorn lone creature and everything went contrairy with him. Things were not likely to go better, I thought, as I saw

Dinner after
first *Copper-*
field.

Carlyle.

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Thackeray.

Judicious
change of a
tag.

the great writer,—kindest as well as wisest of men, but not very patient under sentimental philosophies,—seated next the good Mr. Tagart, who soon was heard launching at him various metaphysical questions in regard to heaven and such like; and the relief was great when Thackeray introduced, with quaint whimsicality, a story which he and I had heard Macready relate in talking to us about his boyish days, of a country actor who had supported himself for six months on his judicious treatment of the "tag" to the *Castle Spectre*. In the original it stands that you are to do away with suspicion, banish vile mistrust, and, almost in the words we had just heard from the minister to the philosopher, "Believe there is a Heaven nor Doubt that Heaven "is just!" in place of which Macready's friend, observing that the drop fell for the most part quite coldly, substituted one night the more telling appeal, "And give us your Applause, for *that* IS ALWAYS "JUST!" which brought down the house with rapture.

This chapter would far outrun its limits if I spoke of other as pleasant gatherings under Dickens's roof during the years which I am now more particularly describing; when, besides the dinners, the musical enjoyments and dancings, as his children became able to take part in them, were incessant. "Remember that for my Biography!" he said to me gravely on twelfth-day in 1849, after telling me what he had done the night before; and as gravely I now redeem my laughing promise that I would. Little Mary and her sister Kate had taken much pains to teach

their father the polka, that he might dance it with them at their brother's birthday festivity (held this year on the 7th, as the 6th was a Sunday); and in the middle of the previous night as he lay in bed, the fear had fallen on him suddenly that the step was forgotten, and then and there, in that wintry dark cold night, he got out of bed to practise it. Anything *more* characteristic could certainly not be told; unless I could have shown him dancing it afterwards, and far excelling the youngest performer in untiring vigour and vivacity. There was no one who approached him on these occasions excepting only our attached friend Captain Marryat, who had a frantic delight in dancing, especially with children, of whom and whose enjoyments he was as fond as it became so thoroughly good hearted a man to be. His name would have stood first among those I have been recalling, as he was among the first in Dickens's liking; but in the autumn of 1848 he had unexpectedly passed away. Other names however still reproach me for omission as my memory goes back. With Marryat's on the earliest page of this volume stands that of Monckton Milnes, familiar with Dickens over all the time it covers, and still more prominent in Tavistock-house days when with Lady Houghton he brought fresh claims to my friend's admiration and regard. Of Bulwer Lytton's frequent presence in all his houses, and of Dickens's admiration for him as one of the supreme masters in his art, so unswerving and so often publicly de-

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A fact for a
biographer.

Marryat's
delight with
children.

Monckton
Milnes.

Lord Lytton.

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clared, it would be needless again to speak. Nor shall I dwell upon his interchange of hospitalities with distinguished men in the two great professions so closely allied to literature and its followers; Denmans, Pollocks, Campbells, and Chittys; Watsons, Southwood Smiths, Lococks, and Elliotsons. To Alfred Tennyson, through all the friendly and familiar days I am describing, he gave full allegiance and honoured welcome. Tom Taylor was often with him; and there was a charm for him I should find it difficult to exaggerate in Lord Dudley Stuart's gentle yet noble character, his refined intelligence and generous public life, expressed so perfectly in his chivalrous face. Incomplete indeed would be the list if I did not add to it the frank and hearty Lord Nugent, who had so much of his grandfather, Goldsmith's friend, in his lettered tastes and jovial enjoyments. Nor should I forget occasional days with dear old Charles Kemble and one or other of his daughters; with Alexander Dyce; and with Harness and his sister, or his niece and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Archdale; made especially pleasant by talk about great days of the stage. It was something to hear Kemble on his sister's Mrs. Beverley; or to see Harness and Dyce exultant in recollecting her Volumnia. The enchantment of the Mrs. Beverley, her brother would delightfully illustrate by imitation of her manner of restraining Beverley's intemperance to their only friend, "You are too busy, sir!" when she quietly came down the stage from a table at

Lord Dudley
Stuart.

Lord Nugent.

Kemble,
Harness, and
Dyce.

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which she had seemed to be occupying herself, laid her hand softly on her husband's arm, and in a gentle half-whisper "No, not too busy; mistaken perhaps; but—" not only stayed his temper but reminded him of obligations forgotten in the heat of it. Up to where the tragic terror began, our friend told us, there was nothing but this composed domestic sweetness, expressed even in the simplicity and neat arrangement of her dress, her cap with the strait band, and her hair gathered up underneath; but all changing when the passion *did* begin; one single disordered lock escaping at the first outbreak, and, in the final madness, all of it streaming dishevelled down her beautiful face. Kemble made no secret of his belief that his sister had the higher genius of the two; but he spoke with rapture of "John's" Macbeth and parts of his Othello; comparing his "Farewell the tranquil mind" to the running down of a clock, an image which he did not know that Hazlitt had applied to the delivery of "To-morrow and to-morrow," in the other tragedy. In all this Harness seemed to agree; and I thought a distinction was not ill put by him, on the night of which I speak, in his remark that the nature in Kemble's acting only supplemented his magnificent art, whereas, though the artist was not less supreme in his sister, it was on nature she most relied, bringing up the other power only to the aid of it. "It was in another sense like your writing," said Harness to Dickens, "the commonest natural feelings made

Mrs. Siddons.

John Kemble.

Good distinction.

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A comparison.

"great, even when not rendered more refined, by "art." Her Constance would have been fishwifly, he declared, if its wonderful truth had not overborne every other feeling; and her Volumnia escaped being vulgar only by being so excessively grand. But it was just what was so called "vulgarity" that made its passionate appeal to the vulgar in a better meaning of the word. When she first entered, Harness said, swaying and surging from side to side with every movement of the Roman crowd itself, as it went out and returned in confusion, she so absorbed her son into herself as she looked at him, so swelled and amplified in her pride and glory for him, that "the people in the pit blubbered all round," and he could no more help it than the rest.

The pit
"blubbering."

Mazzini.

There are yet some other names that should have place in these rambling recollections, though I by no means affect to remember all. One Sunday evening Mazzini made memorable by taking us to see the school he had established in Clerkenwell for the Italian organ-boys. This was after dining with Dickens, who had been brought into personal intercourse with the great Italian by having given money to a begging impostor who made unauthorized use of his name. Edinburgh friends made him regular visits in the spring time: not Jeffrey and his family alone, but sheriff Gordon and his, with whom he was not less intimate, Lord Murray and his wife, Sir William Allan and his niece, Lord Robertson with his wonderful Scotch mimicries, and Peter Fraser

Edinburgh
friends.

with his enchanting Scotch songs; our excellent friend Liston the surgeon, until his fatal illness came in December 1848, being seldom absent from those assembled to bid such visitors welcome. Allan's name may remind me of other artists often at his house, Eastlakes, Leslies, Friths, and Wards, besides those who have had frequent mention, and among whom I should have included Charles as well as Edwin Landseer, and William Boxall. Nor should I drop from this section of his friends, than whom none were more attractive to him, such celebrated names in the sister arts as those of Miss Helen Faucit, an actress worthily associated with the brightest days of our friend Macready's managements, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. John Parry, Mr. Phelps, Mr. Webster, Mr. Harley, Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, Mr. Whitworth, and Miss Dolby. Mr. George Henry Lewes he had an old and great regard for; among other men of letters should not be forgotten the cordial Thomas Ingoldsby, and many-sided true-hearted Charles Knight; Mr. R. H. Horne and his wife were frequent visitors both in London and at seaside holidays; and I have met at his table Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall. There were the Duff Gordons too, the Lyells, and, very old friends of us both, the Emerson Tennents; there was the good George Raymond; Mr. Frank Beard and his wife; the Porter Smiths, valued for Macready's sake as well as their own; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Black, near connections by marriage of George Cattermole, with whom there was intimate intercourse

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Robert
Liston.

Artist
acquaintance.

Visitors at
his house.

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III.

Friends from
America.

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"Open up."

both before and during the residence in Italy; Mr. Thompson, brother of Mrs. Smithson formerly named, and his wife, whose sister Frederick Dickens married; Mr. Mitton, his own early companion; and Mrs. Torrens, who had played with the amateurs in Canada. These are all in my memory so connected with Devonshire-terrace, as friends or familiar acquaintance, that they claim this word before leaving it; and visitors from America, I may remark, had always a grateful reception. Of the Bancrofts mention has been made, and with them should be coupled the Abbot Lawrences, Prescott, Hillard, George Curtis, and Felton's brother. Felton himself did not visit England until the Tavistock-house time. In 1847 there was a delightful day with the Coldens and the Wilkses, relatives by marriage of Jeffrey; in the following year, I think as my rooms because of some accident that closed Devonshire-terrace that day (25th of April), Dickens, Carlyle, and myself foregathered with the admirable Emerson; and M. Van de Weyer will probably remember a dinner where he took joyous part with Dickens in running down a phrase which the learned in books, Mr. Cogswell, on a mission here for the Astor library, had startled us by denouncing as an uncouth Scotch barbarism—*open up*. You found it constantly in Hume, he said, but hardly anywhere else; and he defied us to find it more than once through the whole of the volumes of Gibbon. Upon this, after brief wonder and doubt, we all thought it best to take part in a general

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assault upon *open up*, by invention of phrases on the same plan that should show it in exaggerated burlesque, and support Mr. Cogswell's indictment. Then came a struggle who should carry the absurdity farthest; and the victory remained with M. Van de Weyer until Dickens surpassed even him, and "opened up" depths of almost frenzied absurdity that would have delighted the heart of Leigh Hunt. It will introduce the last and not least honoured name into my list of his acquaintance and friends, if I mention his amusing little interruption one day to Professor Owen's description of a telescope of huge dimensions built by an enterprising clergyman who had taken to the study of the stars; and who was eager, said Owen, to see farther into heaven—he was going to say, than Lord Rosse; if Dickens had not drily interposed, "than his professional studies had enabled him to penetrate."

M. Van de
Weyer.

Ambition to
see into
heaven.

Some incidents that belong specially to the three years that closed his residence in the home thus associated with not the least interesting part of his career, will farther show what now were his occupations and ways of life. In the summer of 1849 he came up from Broadstairs to attend a Mansion-house dinner, which the lord mayor of that day had been moved by a laudable ambition to give to "literature and art," which he supposed would be adequately represented by the Royal Academy, the contributors to *Punch*, Dickens, and one or two newspaper men. On the whole the result was not cheering; the worthy

Literature
and art in the
City.

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Doubtful
compliment.

Jest out of
place.

▲ remon-
strance
suppressed.

chief magistrate, no doubt quite undesignedly, expressing too much surprise at the unaccustomed faces around him to be altogether complimentary. In general (this was the tone) we are in the habit of having princes, dukes, ministers, and what not for our guests, but what a delight, all the greater for being unusual, to see gentlemen like you! In other words, what could possibly be pleasanter than for people satiated with greatness to get for a while by way of change into the butler's pantry? This in substance was Dickens's account to me next day, and his reason for having been very careful in his acknowledgment of the toast of "the Novelists." He was nettled not a little therefore by a jesting allusion to himself in the *Daily News* in connection with the proceedings, and asked me to forward a remonstrance. Having a strong dislike to all such displays of sensitiveness, I suppressed the letter; but it is perhaps worth printing now. Its date is Broadstairs, Wednesday 11th of July 1849. "I have no other interest in, "or concern with, a most facetious article on last "Saturday's dinner at the Mansion-house, which "appeared in your paper of yesterday, and found "its way here to-day, than that it misrepresents "me in what I said on the occasion. If you "should not think it at all damaging to the wit "of that satire to state what I did say, I shall be "much obliged to you. It was this . . . That I "considered the compliment of a recognition of "Literature by the citizens of London the more "acceptable to us because it was unusual in that

"hall, and likely to be an advantage and benefit
 "to them in proportion as it became in future
 "less unusual. That, on behalf of the novelists,
 "I accepted the tribute as an appropriate one;
 "inasmuch as we had sometimes reason to hope
 "that our imaginary worlds afforded an occasional
 "refuge to men busily engaged in the toils of
 "life, from which they came forth none the worse
 "to a renewal of its strivings; and certainly that
 "the chief magistrate of the greatest city in the
 "world might be fitly regarded as the represen-
 "tative of that class of our readers."

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A hint for
 London
 citizens.

Of an incident towards the close of the year, though it had important practical results, brief mention will here suffice. We saw the Mannings executed on the walls of Horsemonger-lane gaol; and with the letter which Dickens wrote next day to the *Times* descriptive of what we had witnessed on that memorable morning, there began an active agitation against public executions which never ceased until the salutary change was effected which has worked so well. Shortly after this he visited Rockingham-castle, the seat of Mr. and Mrs. Watson, his Lausanne friends; and I must preface by a word or two the amusing letter in which he told me of this visit. It was written in character, and the character was that of an American visitor to England.

The
 Mannings
 hanged.

Letter against
 public execu-
 tions.

"I knew him, Horatio;" and a very kindly honest man he was, who had come to England

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An American
observer in
England.

At English
country-
houses.

Marvels of
English
manners.

authorised to make enquiry into our general agricultural condition, and who discharged his mission by publishing some reports extremely creditable to his good sense and ability, expressed in a plain nervous English that reminded one of the rural writings of Cobbett. But in an evil hour he published also a series of private letters to friends written from the various residences his introductions had opened to him; and these were filled with revelations as to the internal economy of English noblemen's country houses, of a highly startling description. As for example, how, on arrival at a house your "name is announced, and "your portmanteau immediately taken into your "chamber, which the servant shows you, with "every convenience." How "you are asked by "the servant at breakfast what you will have, or "you get up and help yourself." How at dinner you don't dash at the dishes, or contend for the "fixings," but wait till "his portion is handed by "servants to every one." How all the wines, fruit, glasses, candlesticks, lamps, and plate are "taken "care of" by butlers, who have under-butlers for their "adjuncts;" how ladies never wear "white "satin shoes or white gloves more than once;" how dinner-napkins are "never left upon the "table, but either thrown into your chair or on "the floor under the table;" how no end of pains are taken to "empty slops;" and above all what a national propensity there is to brush a man's clothes and polish his boots, whensoever and

wheresoever the clothes and boots can be seized without the man.* This was what Dickens good-humouredly laughs at.

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"Rockingham Castle: Friday, thirtieth of November, 1849. Picture to yourself, my dear F, a large old castle, approached by an ancient keep, portcullis, &c, &c, filled with company, waited on by six-and-twenty servants; the slops (and wine-glasses) continually being emptied; and my clothes (with myself in them) always being carried off to all sorts of places; and you will have a faint idea of the mansion in which I am at present staying. I should have written to you yesterday, but for having had a very busy day. Among the guests is a Miss B, sister of the Honourable Miss B (of Salem, Mass.), whom we once met at the house of our distinguished literary countryman Colonel Landor. This lady is renowned as an amateur actress, so last night

Letter from
Rockingham.

Private
theatricals.

* Here is really an only average specimen of the letters as published: "I forgot to say, if you leave your chamber twenty times a day, after using your basin, you would find it clean, and the pitcher replenished on your return, and that you cannot take your clothes off, but they are taken away, brushed, folded, pressed, and placed in the bureau; and at the dressing-hour, before dinner, you find your candles lighted, your clothes laid out, your shoes cleaned, and everything arranged for use; . . . the dress-clothes brushed and folded in the nicest manner, and cold water, and hot water, and clean napkins in the greatest abundance. . . . Imagine an elegant chamber, fresh water in basins, in goblets, in tubs, and sheets of the finest linen!"

Marked
attentions.

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Scenes
played.

Major
Bentley.

General
Boxall.

"we got up in the great hall some scenes from
"the *School for Scandal*; the scene with the lunatic
"on the wall, from the *Nicholas Nickleby* of Major-
"General the Hon. C. Dickens (Richmond, Va.);
"some conjuring; and then finished off with
"country-dances; of which we had two admirably
"good ones, quite new to me, though really old.
"Getting the words, and making the preparations,
"occupied (as you may believe) the whole day;
"and it was three o'clock before I got to bed. It
"was an excellent entertainment, and we were all
"uncommonly merry... I had a very polite letter
"from our enterprising countryman Major Bentley*
"(of Lexington, Ky.), which I shall show you when
"I come home. We leave here this afternoon,
"and I shall expect you according to appoint-
"ment, at a quarter past ten A.M. to-morrow. Of
"all the country-houses and estates I have yet
"seen in England, I think this is by far the best.
"Everything undertaken eventuates in a most
"magnificent hospitality; and you will be pleased
"to hear that our celebrated fellow citizen General
"Boxall (Pittsburg, Penn.) is engaged in handing
"down to posterity the face of the owner of the
"mansion and of his youthful son and daughter.
"At a future time it will be my duty to report on
"the turnips, mangelwurzels, ploughs, and live
"stock; and for the present I will only say that I
"regard it as a fortunate circumstance for the

* From this time to his death there was always friendly intercourse with his old publisher Mr. Bentley.

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"neighbouring community that this patrimony
 "should have fallen to my spirited and en-
 "lightened host. Every one has profited by it,
 "and the labouring people in especial are thor-
 "oughly well cared-for and looked after. To see A family scene.
 "all the household, headed by an enormously fat
 "housekeeper, occupying the back benches last
 "night, laughing and applauding without any
 "restraint; and to see a blushing sleek-headed
 "footman produce, for the watch-trick, a silver
 "watch of the most portentous dimensions, amidst
 "the rapturous delight of his brethren and sister-
 "hood; was a very pleasant spectacle, even to a
 "conscientious republican like yourself or me,
 "who cannot but contemplate the parent country
 "with feelings of pride in our own land, which
 "(as was well observed by the Honorable Elias
 "Deeze, of Hertford, Conn.) is truly the land of
 "the free. Best remembrances from Columbia's
 "daughters. Ever thine, my dear F,—C.H."
 Dickens, during the too brief time this excellent Visit to Rock-
ingham.
 friend was spared to him, often repeated his
 visits to Rockingham, always a surpassing enjoy-
 ment; and in the winter of 1851 he accomplished
 there, with help of the country carpenter, "a very
 "elegant little theatre," of which he constituted Later visits.
 himself manager, and had among his actors a
 brother of the lady referred to in his letter, "a
 "very good comic actor, but loose in words;"
 poor Augustus Stafford "more than passable;"
 and "a son of Vernon Smith's, really a capital
 "low comedian." It will be one more added to

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Doing too
much.

the many examples I have given of his untiring energy both in work and play, if I mention the fact that this theatre was opened at Rockingham for their first representation on Wednesday the 15th of January; that after the performance there was a country dance which lasted far into the morning; and that on the next evening, after a railway journey of more than 120 miles, he dined in London with the prime minister, Lord John Russell.

Death of
Francis
Jeffrey.

A little earlier in that winter we had together taken his eldest son to Eton, and a little later he had a great sorrow. "Poor dear Jeffrey!" he wrote to me on the 29th January, 1850. "I bought 'a *Times* at the station yesterday morning, and 'was so stunned by the announcement, that I felt 'it in that wounded part of me, almost directly; 'and the bad symptoms (modified) returned 'within a few hours. I had a letter from him in 'extraordinary good spirits within this week or 'two—he was better, he said, than he had been 'for a long time—and I sent him proof-sheets of 'the number only last Wednesday. I say nothing 'of his wonderful abilities and great career, but 'he was a most affectionate and devoted friend 'to me; and though no man could wish to live 'and die more happily, so old in years and yet 'so young in faculties and sympathies, I am very 'very deeply grieved for his loss." He was justly entitled to feel pride in being able so to word his tribute of sorrowing affection. Jeffrey had completed with consummate success, if ever man

Dickens on
Jeffrey's
death.

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did, the work appointed him in this world; and few, after a life of such activities, have left a memory so unstained and pure. But other and sharper sorrows awaited Dickens.

The chief occupation of the past and present year, *David Copperfield*, will have a chapter to itself, and in this may be touched but lightly. Once fairly in it, the story bore him irresistibly along; certainly with less trouble to himself in the composition, beyond that ardent sympathy with the creatures of the fancy which always made so absolutely real to him their sufferings or sorrows; and he was probably never less harassed by interruptions or breaks in his invention. His principal hesitation occurred in connection with the child-wife Dora, who had become a great favourite as he went on; and it was shortly after her fate had been decided, in the early autumn of 1850,* but before she breathed her last, that

Progress of
his work.

The child-
wife.

* It may be proper to record the fact that he had made a short run to Paris, with Maclise, at the end of June, of which sufficient farther note will have been taken if I print the subjoined passages from a letter to me dated 24th June, 1850, Hôtel Windsor, Rue de Rivoli. "There being no room in the Hôtel Brighton, we are lodged (in a very good apartment) here. The heat is absolutely frightful. I never felt anything like it in Italy. Sleep is next to impossible, except in the day, when the room is dark, and the patient exhausted. We purpose leaving here on Saturday morning and going to Rouen, whence we shall proceed either to Havre or Dieppe, and so arrange our proceedings as to be home, please God, on Tuesday evening. We are going to

A run to
Paris.

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a third daughter was born to him, to whom he gave his dying little heroine's name. On these and other points, without forestalling what waits to be said of the composition of this fine story, a few illustrative words from his letters will properly find a place here. "*Copperfield* half done," he wrote of the second number on the 6th of June. "I feel, thank God, quite confident in the story. I have a move in it ready for this month; another for next; and another for the next." "I think it is necessary" (15th of November) "to

"some of the little theatres to-night, and on Wednesday to the Français, for Rachel's last performance before she goes to London. There does not seem to be anything remarkable in progress, in the theatrical way. Nor do I observe that out of doors the place is much changed, except in respect of the carriages which are certainly less numerous. I also think the Sunday is even much more a day of business than it used to be. As we are going into the country with Regnier to-morrow, I write this after letter time and before going out to dine at the Trois Frères, that it may come to you by to-morrow's post. The twelve hours' journey here is astounding—marvellously done, except in respect of the means of refreshment, which are absolutely none. Mac is very well (extremely loose as to his waist-coat, and otherwise careless in regard of buttons) and sends his love. De Fresne proposes a dinner with all the notabilities of Paris present, but I won't stand it! I really have undergone so much fatigue from work, that I am resolved not even to see him, but to please myself. I find, my child (as Horace Walpole would say), that I have written you nothing here, but you will take the will for the deed."

"decide against the special pleader. Your reasons
 "quite suffice. I am not sure but that the bank-
 "ing house might do. I will consider it in a
 "walk." "Banking business impracticable" (17th
 of November) "on account of the confinement:
 "which would stop the story, I foresee. I have
 "taken, for the present at all events, the proctor.
 "I am wonderfully in harness, and nothing galls
 "or frets." "*Copperfield* done" (20th of November)
 "after two days' very hard work indeed; and I
 "think a smashing number. His first dissipation
 "I hope will be found worthy of attention, as a piece
 "of grotesque truth." "I feel a great hope" (23rd
 of January, 1850) "that I shall be remembered
 "by little Em'ly, a good many years to come."
 "I begin to have my doubts of being able to join
 "you" (20th of February), "for *Copperfield* runs
 "high, and must be done to-morrow. But I'll do
 "it if possible, and strain every nerve. Some
 "beautiful comic love, I hope, in the number."
 "Still undecided about Dora" (7th of May), "but
 "MUST decide to-day."* "I have been" (Tuesday,

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Banker or
proctor?

David's first
fall.

Little Em'ly.

* The rest of the letter may be allowed to fill the corner
 of a note. The allusions to Rogers and Landor are by way
 of reply to an invitation I had sent him. "I am extremely
 "sorry to hear about Fox. Shall call to enquire, as I come
 "by to the Temple. And will call on you (taking the
 "chance of finding you) on my way to that Seat of Boredom.
 "I wrote my paper for *H. W.* yesterday, and have begun
 "*Copperfield* this morning. Still undecided about Dora, but
 "MUST decide to-day. La difficulté d'écrire l'anglais m'est
 "extrêmement ennuyeuse. Ah, mon Dieu! si l'on pourrait

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Doubts as to
Dora settled.

20th of August) "very hard at work these three days, and have still Dora to kill. But with good luck, I may do it to-morrow. Obligated to go to Shepherd's-bush to-day, and can consequently do little this morning. Am eschewing all sorts of things that present themselves to my fancy—"coming in such crowds!" "Work in a very decent state of advancement" (13th of August) "domesticity notwithstanding. I hope I shall have a splendid number. I feel the story to its minutest point." "Mrs Micawber is still" (15th of August), "I regret to say, in statu quo. Ever yours, WILKINS MICAWBER." The little girl was born the next day, the 16th, and received the name of Dora Annie. The most part of what remained of the year was passed away from home.

Third
daughter
born.

"The year following did not open with favourable omen, both the child and its mother having severe illness. The former rallied however, and "little Dora is getting on bravely, thank God!" was his bulletin of the early part of February. Soon after, it was resolved to make trial of Great Malvern for Mrs. Dickens; and lodgings were

At Great
Malvern.

"*toujours écrire cette belle langue de France! Monsieur Rogere! Ah! qu'il est homme d'esprit, homme de génie, homme des lettres! Monsieur Landore! Ah qu'il parle français—pas parfaitement comme un ange—un peu (peut-être) comme un diable! Mais il est bon garçon—sérieusement, il est un de la vraie noblesse de la nature. Votre tout dévoué, CHARLES. A Monsieur Monsieur Fos-tere.*"

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taken there in March, Dickens and her sister accompanying her, and the children being left in London. "It is a most beautiful place," he wrote to me (15th of March). "O Heaven, to meet the "Cold Waterers (as I did this morning when I "went out for a shower-bath) dashing down the "hills, with severe expressions on their countenances, like men doing matches and not exactly winning! Then, a young lady in a grey "polka going *up* the hills, regardless of legs; and "meeting a young gentleman (a bad case, I should "say) with a light black silk cap on under his hat, "and the pimples of I don't know how many "douches under that. Likewise an old man who "ran over a milk-child, rather than stop!—with "no neckcloth, on principle; and with his mouth "wide open, to catch the morning air." This was the month, as we have seen, when the performances for the Guild were in active preparation, and it was also the date of the farewell dinner to our friend Macready on his quitting the stage. Dickens and myself came up for it from Malvern, to which he returned the next day; and from the spirited speech in which he gave the health of the chairman at the dinner, I will add a few words for the sake of the truth expressed in them. "There is a popular prejudice, a kind of superstition, "that authors are not a particularly united body, "and I am afraid that this may contain half a "grain or so of the veracious. But of our chairman I have never in my life made public mention without adding what I can never repress,

Cold
Waterers.

Ante, p. 169.

Macready's
farewell.

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Experience
of a brother
author.

"that in the path we both tread I have uniformly
"found him to be, from the first, the most generous
"of men; quick to encourage, slow to disparage,
"and ever anxious to assert the order of which he
"is so great an ornament. That we men of letters
"are, or have been, invariably or inseparably
"attached to each other, it may not be possible
"to say, formerly or now; but there cannot now
"be, and there cannot ever have been, among the
"followers of literature, a man so entirely without
"the grudging little jealousies that too often dis-
"parage its brightness, as Sir Edward Bulwer
"Lytton." That was as richly merited as it is
happily said.

Lord Lytton.

The Home at
Shepherd's-
bush.

Dickens had to return to London after the
middle of March for business connected with a
charitable Home established at Shepherd's-bush
by Miss Coutts, in the benevolent hope of rescu-
ing fallen women by testing their fitness for emi-
gration, of which future mention will be made,
and which largely and regularly occupied his time
for several years. On this occasion his stay was
prolonged by the illness of his father. His health
had been failing latterly, and graver symptoms
were now spoken of. "I saw my poor father
"twice yesterday," he wrote to me on the 27th,
"the second time between ten and eleven at night.
"In the morning I thought him not so well. At
"night, as well as any one in such a situation
"could be." Next day he was so much better
that his son went back to Malvern, and even gave
us grounds for hope that we might yet have his

Father's
illness.

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presence in Hertfordshire to advise on some questions connected with the comedy which Sir Edward Lytton had written for the Guild. But the end came suddenly. I returned from Knebworth to London, supposing that some accident had detained him at Malvern; and at my house this letter waited me. "Devonshire-terrace, Monday, thirty-first of March 1851. . . . My poor father died this morning at five and twenty minutes to six. They had sent for me to Malvern, but I passed John on the railway; for I came up with the intention of hurrying down to Bulwer Lytton's to-day before you should have left. I arrived at eleven last night, and was in Keppel-street at a quarter past eleven. But he did not know me, nor any one. He began to sink at about noon yesterday, and never rallied afterwards. I remained there until he died—O so quietly. . . I hardly know what to do. I am going up to Highgate to get the ground. Perhaps you may like to go, and I should like it if you do. I will not leave here before two o'clock. I think I must go down to Malvern again, at night, to know what is to be done about the children's mourning; and as you are returning to Bulwer's I should like to have gone that way, if *Bradshaw* gave me any hope of doing it. I wish most particularly to see you, I needn't say. I must not let myself be distracted by anything—and God knows I have left a sad sight!—from the scheme on which so much depends. Most part of the alterations proposed

Death of John
 Dickens.

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Tribute by
his son.

"I think good." Mr. John Dickens was laid in Highgate Cemetery on the 5th of April; and the stone placed over him by the son who has made his name a famous one in England, bore tribute to his "zealous, useful, cheerful spirit." What more is to be said of him will be most becomingly said in speaking of *David Copperfield*. While the book was in course of being written, all that had been best in him came more and more vividly back to its author's memory; as time wore on, nothing else was remembered; and five years before his own death, after using in one of his letters to me a phrase rather out of the common with him, this was added: "I find this looks like my poor father, whom I regard as a better man the longer I live."

Theatrical-
fund dinner.

He was at this time under promise to take the chair at the General Theatrical Fund on the 14th of April. Great efforts were made to relieve him from the promise; but such special importance was attached to his being present, and the Fund so sorely then required help, that, no change of day being found possible for the actors who desired to attend, he yielded to the pressure put upon him; of which the result was to throw upon me a sad responsibility. The reader will understand why, even at this distance of time, my allusion to it is brief.

The train from Malvern brought him up only five minutes short of the hour appointed for the dinner, and we first met that day at the London Tavern. I never heard him to greater advantage

than in the speech that followed. His liking for this Fund was the fact of its not confining its benefits to any special or exclusive body of actors, but opening them generously to all; and he gave a description of the kind of actor, going down to the infinitesimally small, not omitted from such kind help, which had a half-pathetic humour in it that makes it charming still. "In our Fund," he said, "the word exclusiveness is not known. "We include every actor, whether he be Hamlet or Benedict: the ghost, the bandit, or the court physician; or, in his one person, the whole king's army. He may do the light business, or the heavy, or the comic, or the eccentric. He may be the captain who courts the young lady, whose uncle still unaccountably persists in dressing himself in a costume one hundred years older than his time. Or he may be the young lady's brother in the white gloves and inexpressibles, whose duty in the family appears to be to listen to the female members of it whenever they sing, and to shake hands with everybody between all the verses. Or he may be the baron who gives the fête, and who sits uneasily on the sofa under a canopy with the baroness while the fête is going on. Or he may be the peasant at the fête who comes on the stage to swell the drinking chorus, and who, it may be observed, always turns his glass upside down before he begins to drink out of it. Or he may be the clown who takes away the doorstep of the house where the evening party is going on. Or he may be

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Claims of the
Fund to sup-
port.

Absence of
exclusive-
ness.

Plan of small
actors.

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Remember-
ing the for-
gotten.

"the gentleman who issues out of the house on
"the false alarm, and is precipitated into the
"area. Or, if an actress, she may be the fairy
"who resides for ever in a revolving star with an
"occasional visit to a bower or a palace. Or
"again, if an actor, he may be the armed head
"of the witch's cauldron; or even that extra-
"ordinary witch, concerning whom I have ob-
"served in country places, that he is much less
"like the notion formed from the description of
"Hopkins than the Malcolm or Donalbain of the
"previous scenes. This society, in short, says,
"Be you what you may, be you actor or actress,
"be your path in your profession never so high
"or never so low, never so haughty or never so
"humble, we offer you the means of doing good
"to yourselves, and of doing good to your
"brethren."

The Fund and
its sub-
scribers.

Death of
his little
daughter.

Half an hour before he rose to speak I had been called out of the room. It was the servant from Devonshire-terrace to tell me his child Dora was suddenly dead. She had not been strong from her birth; but there was just at this time no cause for special fear, when unexpected convulsions came, and the frail little life passed away. My decision had to be formed at once; and I satisfied myself that it would be best to permit his part of the proceedings to close before the truth was told to him. But as he went on, after the sentences I have quoted, to speak of actors having to come from scenes of sickness, of suffering, aye, even of death itself, to play their parts

before us, my part was very difficult. "Yet how
"often is it with all of us," he proceeded to say,
and I remember to this hour with what anguish
I listened to words that had for myself alone, in
all the crowded room, their full significance:
"how often is it with all of us, that in our several
"spheres we have to do violence to our feelings,
"and to hide our hearts in carrying on this fight
"of life, if we would bravely discharge in it our
"duties and responsibilities." In the disclosure
that followed when he left the chair, Mr. Lemon,
who was present, assisted me; and I left this good
friend with him next day, when I went myself to
Malvern and brought back Mrs. Dickens and her
sister. The little child lies in a grave at High-
gate near that of Mr. and Mrs. John Dickens; and
on the stone which covers her is now written also
her father's name, and those of two of her bro-
thers.

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Difficult tasks
in life.

Dora's grave.

One more public discussion he took part in,
before quitting London for the rest of the sum-
mer; and what he said (it was a meeting, with
Lord Carlisle in the chair, in aid of Sanitary re-
form) very pregnantly illustrates what was re-
marked by me on a former page. He declared
his belief that neither education nor religion
could do anything really useful in social improve-
ment until the way had been paved for their
ministrations by cleanliness and decency. He
spoke warmly of the services of Lord Ashley in
connection with ragged schools, but he put the
case of a miserable child tempted into one of

Ante, p. 183.

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Advocating
sanitary
reform.

Page 102 of
Vol. II.

Lord Shaftes-
bury.

those schools out of the noisome places in which his life was passed, and he asked what a few hours' teaching could effect against the ever-renewed lesson of a whole existence. "But give him, and his, a glimpse of heaven through a little of its light and air; give them water; help them to be clean; lighten the heavy atmosphere in which their spirits flag, and which makes them the callous things they are; take the body of the dead relative from the room where the living live with it, and where such loathsome familiarity deprives death itself of awe; and then, but not before, they will be brought willingly to hear of Him whose thoughts were so much with the wretched, and who had compassion for all human sorrow." He closed by proposing Lord Ashley's health as having preferred the higher ambition of labouring for the poor to that of pursuing the career open to him in the service of the State; and as having also had "the courage on all occasions to face the cant which is the worst and commonest of all, the cant about the cant of philanthropy." Lord Shaftesbury first dined with him in the following year at Tavistock-house.

Shortly after the Sanitary meeting came the first Guild performances; and then Dickens left Devonshire-terrace, never to return to it. What occupied him in the interval before he took possession of his new abode, has before been told; but two letters were overlooked in describing his progress in the labour of the previous year, and

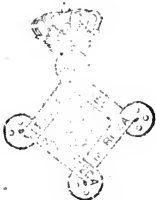
brief extracts from them will naturally lead me to the subject of my next chapter. "I have been" (15th of September) "tremendously at work these two days; eight hours at a stretch yesterday, and six hours and a half to-day, with the Ham and Steerforth chapter, which has completely knocked me over—utterly defeated me!" "I am" (21st of October) "within three pages of the shore; and am strangely divided, as usual in such cases, between sorrow and joy. Oh, my dear Forster, if I were to say half of what *Copperfield* makes me feel to-night, how strangely, even to you, I should be turned inside out! I seem to be sending some part of myself into the Shadowy World."

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1848-51.
Realities of
his books to
Dickens.

END OF VOL. IV.

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